

**Title: The Evangelisation of the Catholic Church in Southern Africa: Community  
Serving Humanity.**

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# COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES

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## Abstract

This thesis critically examines the Pastoral Plan of the Catholic Church in Southern Africa “Community Serving Humanity” and its evangelical and participatory role of evangelisation and social transformation including its reception by the Southern African Catholic community.

The aim and nature of the Pastoral Plan remains with building a Church that is a real community where the people of God experience love as sisters and brothers. This calls for better ministerial service delivery and a share in God’s universal plan (God’s Mission, *Missio Dei*). The issue of facilitating formation and transformation to ensure “Community Serving Humanity”, requires serious discussion or dialogue, where proposed useful community building ministries are exercised. For example, the Pastoral Plan factors in implementations abound in Small Christian Communities, The Renew Process; and Task Groups (SACBC 1989:19). Are they still relevant today? They can still bring transformation in a new different way in the new South Africa (a heart and society change). In view of this there is also a comparison between the communities past and present.

The research brings understanding whereby the history of the Catholic Church community in Southern Africa, Pastoral Plan formulation and implementation, and theological perspectives are presented. The research incorporates interview material with persons involved in the Pastoral Plan’s origins and initial implementation.

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### **List of abbreviations**

AE:	Apostolic Exhortation
AG:	Ad Gentes
AL:	Amoris Laetitia
CCC:	Catechism of the Catholic Church
CMRSSA:	Conference of Major Religious Superiors of Southern Africa
EA:	Ecclesia in Africa
EG:	Evangelii Gaudium
ETSA:	Evangelisation Today in South Africa
GS:	Gaudium et Spes
LG:	Lumen Gentium
PDV:	Pastores Dabo Vobis
PP:	Pastoral Plan
RCIA:	Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults
SACBC:	South African Catholic Bishops Conference
SC:	Sacrosanctum Concilium
SCJ:	Congregation of the Priests of the Sacred Heart of Jesus
St:	Saint
Vat II:	Second Vatican Council

## Chapter One – Introduction

This research is based on the central theme for the Pastoral Plan of the Catholic Church in Southern Africa: Community Serving Humanity (1989), which means evangelisation. The Southern African Catholic Bishops' Conference adopted this evangelisation theme from the 1974 Synod of Bishops (Apostolic exhortation of Pope Paul VI, *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, Evangelisation in the Modern World) meeting in Rome intending to develop it in local contexts. The pastoral plan, as the Southern African Catholic Bishops' vision of an evangelisation process with contemporary relevance, was a response to the great need for transformation in the region. Transformation was basically required in the context of political emancipation, but the Church felt that it had to play a vital role in ensuring the restoration of human dignity in the political arena. The challenge relating to apartheid was to attempt to bring social structures more in line with God's will and purpose for humanity.

There was a clear ecumenical notion of church leadership and church members being unified against the apartheid regime. Nonetheless did the Pastoral Plan in fact embrace various other denominations or was its focus kept strictly on the Catholic membership? Yes the Pastoral Plan embraced other denominations, for an example, Anglicans got training and participated in Renew Process (Ward 2016). To further answer this question, the present study will examine the facilitating role played by the Catholic Church in Southern Africa to spread evangelisation. From its preparation to its promulgation stage, the Pastoral Plan and its reception, both within and outside the Catholic Church in Southern Africa, will be scrutinized. The central theme of the plan - Community Serving Humanity - has two dimensions one of which is internal, concerning "increasing community spirit in the Church", and the other is external and "about building a better society, which meant improving the quality of life, working for human dignity and social justice and promoting human development" (Kearney 2009:265).

The Southern African Catholic Bishops' Conference mentioned as crucial point that the Pastoral Plan was "a document of the whole Church of Southern Africa and through it our whole Church is speaking to itself" (1989:3). The bishops included Botswana, Namibia and Swaziland (SACBC 1989:3), each with his own area of concern, and they encouraged the adaptation of the Pastoral Plan to the specific needs and circumstances in different countries, regions and dioceses. Allowing such adaptations did not diminish

or tamper with the common unifying vision of the Pastoral Plan which was to strengthen and to offer support to the faithful in challenging times.

The Pastoral Plan highlights the life of the Church as bound to the plan and mission of God, the unconditional shepherd who is beyond human perceptions. It is the Church that reflects and adopts the way of God (evangelisation) and brings it to life. The Church has to be a focal point, welcoming all, brothers and sisters, irrespective of their origin and, thus, serving them as people of God. Thus the Church offers humanity the possibility to be truly human, formed in God's image. It gives people an important share in God's mission or universal plan, hence the plan's theme: Community Serving Humanity.

Terms used in this research are defined as follows. "Community" refers to the community sharing in God's community, the community of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit (Decock 1991:49). God is the model for the community of human beings. The term "Serving" is concerned with human actions or the roles performed as part of the community. This is evangelisation (SACBC 1989) and it has to do with developing and transforming the community in which one lives and practises one's faith.

"Missio Dei" or God's mission (Englesviken 2003:482) represents God's universal plan for the community to serve God's people. God's focus is on the entire world to receive salvation and the Church starts small with a particular (human) community to play part in God's mission. "Transformation" is not a simple concept as it refers to breaking down barriers which exist between Church and community. The term "Humanity" applies to people in general. The "Community Serving Humanity" theme bears witness to an African concept of humanity as in *Umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu* (Shutte 1991:185), meaning that a person is a person because of other people.

The study is presented in five chapters. After the introduction in the first chapter, the second chapter will critically look at the development of the Catholic Church in Southern Africa including its historical background, its notions of the formulation of the Pastoral Plan and the central themes which provide the concept of community and concern for evangelisation. The community background, that which constitutes community and formulation of the Pastoral Plan will be discussed in order to provide a solid foundation for the research title.

Chapter three looks at evangelisation as the participatory role played in the community by the Church. The Catholic Church in serving humanity participates in community and



implements the Pastoral Plan. The Church fulfils its role in Small Christian Communities, initiating renewal processes and forming Task Groups. The success of the Church's Pastoral Plan is measured by its reception in the circles of clergy and theologians as well as in religious congregations and lay faithful. The various lay associations are also included and the service they offer humanity is discussed.

The theological perspective on transforming the Church-humanity relation is the subject of chapter four. It focuses on the elimination of boundaries. The Church's vision for, and its dealing with, transformation is considered. Its understanding of missionary tasks is scrutinized. Chapter five presents a summary and the conclusions of the study as well as ideas for the way forward. A bibliography follows.

### **Introduction**

Chapter two discusses the Catholic Church in the context of its history, its Pastoral Plan (1989), and its evangelisation, thus presenting the background against which the Church serves contemporary community. The Pastoral Plan ascribes the following characteristics to the concept of community: it is based on human beings, but it is not the result of an urge felt by human beings but by God. God offers the divine community of Father, Son and Holy Spirit as a model for building the human community (SACBC 1989:17) while the image of God is hidden in us as we are created in his image (Genesis 2:7).

A second element is that, through Jesus, the new human community was established. This new community came into being around Jesus Christ himself and has two distinctive features, “Love of God and love of one another” (SACBC 1989:17). These solemnly confirm the unity between human beings and God. This unity has to be simultaneously spiritual, emotional, psychological and physical if positively transformed evangelisation is to be provided for the entire community and in the different social spheres of human beings.

Such is the community that the Southern African Catholic Church strove to build. It has encouraged all its members to work towards the aim of love and unity. Church members are to be the visible signs of this love and unity, and they act as instruments to realise God’s wishes for God’s people, in other words for all of humanity. The mission of the Church, namely evangelisation, has therefore to move simultaneously with an increase in love and unity. This is what Onwubiko termed: “community-oriented Ecclesia” (2001:67).

Although communities meet challenges, they should move beyond these and be life-giving as groups and as individuals to fulfil their duty in relation to God’s mission. The Vatican Council II taught that “The union of the human family is greatly fostered and perfected by the unity that Christ established among us” (GS 42). The human family referred to here is the Church. The Church has to expand, that is, evangelisation is needed by word (preaching) and deed.

## **Historical Background (Church and Pastoral Plan)**

In regard to the history of the Catholic Church and that of the Pastoral Plan, it is essential to mention the important reasons for formulating the plan. The history provided here concerns contemporary Southern Africa, mainly focusing on the twentieth century, the apartheid era and beyond, and relating to South Africa, Botswana, Namibia and Swaziland. The following historical notes point out evangelisation activities in these countries, especially in view of the wish to give life to the central concept of Community Serving Humanity.

The earliest Catholic missionary work in South Africa started in 1805 when the 1804 Church Ordinances took effect (Brain 1999:39), but an important later phase began in the 1920s when the Missionaries of Mariannhill congregation (:42) were given their vicariate to administer. Their arrival dates back to 1882. Other religious congregations had arrived and were working in South Africa, for example, Dominicans, Spiritans, and Benedictines, but the South African Catholic Bishops' Conference was officially formed on 27 March 1947 with the help of Archbishop Lucas (:48). Between 1951 and 1998 many dioceses were founded, the South African Catholic Bishops' Conference executive committees were organised (to undergo, over time, many changes), and the South African Council of Priests was formed in 1970 with approval of the SACBC. Various diocesan bodies were established to serve the dioceses, for example the College of Consulters. Deaneries were set up for the sake of cooperation of parishes and the Conference of Major Religious Superiors of Southern Africa (CMRSSA) was organised to represent both men and women active in religious functions. The CMRSSA was formed after the second Vatican council (:54-55).

When it comes to laity involvement, diocesan pastoral councils were established with a view to be represented in the Commission of the Lay Apostolate (Brain 1999:55). The *Lumen Gentium* document played a vital role in this regard. Thus parishes too were encouraged to have pastoral councils. Some dioceses since have had diocesan synods which interact with the laity and which consider ideas and suggestions that reach them from the dioceses. For example, in the archdiocese of Durban this kind of synod takes place every five years and during the session the theme that will be central in the next five years is introduced after consultation with the laity. Preparations for the synods are in the hands of both laity and clergy. The synods assist bishops in their various territories when they wish to consult experts among the laity in different diocesan structures. They recommend specific members of the laity and these help the bishops to

make well informed decisions on matters concerning the wellbeing of church members in their dioceses. The same diocesan structures assisted with the formulating of the Pastoral Plan (1989).

The first and most important argument supporting the Pastoral Plan was the SACBC's suggestion to base the Church on Christ's plan for the life of the Church (SACBC 1989:5). The Church should live to remove boundaries and barriers and reach out to all its members and to people in general. The reality is that boundaries exist as socio-political demarcations. They were however not for separating people but to identify or describe where they came from. Bate (1999) saw the future Church as envisioned by the SACBC as a real possibility allowing the Church to become the Church that it wanted to be. A renewed evangelisation would enable the Church to live out its vision.

Hence the second reason for the formulation of the Pastoral Plan: a new true Church community had to be established where everyone could have a sense of belonging (SACBC 1989:7) and serve all people, irrespective of their historical background and origins. This required moving beyond questions of skin pigmentation, language and culture. People from different countries and societies were encouraged to embrace faith as brothers and sisters in Christ. This Church made people feel they belonged to a family, they were at home and they had an awareness of ownership. They interacted with each other on a personal level, as Church members, and together they fought all forms of discrimination.

Equal service had to be rendered to all of humanity. In a very explicit manner this Church had to help people "to a life which is truly human, truly formed in the image of God" (SACBC 1989:5). The kind of service expected to be provided in this context was that of healing people from suffering, be it spiritual, emotional, psychological or physical suffering. Again, the plan was concerned with "increasing the sense of community and of the serving church" (Bate 1999:31).

A close look at these reasons for formulating the Pastoral Plan tells us that it set out to safeguard a respect for human dignity. The wellbeing of the human being takes priority in the Pastoral Plan and, hence, the plan addresses the needs of inhabitants of Southern Africa as well as the injustices committed against them. The Pastoral Plan is concerned with transformation of human life in its entirety, including changing the considerations of heart and mind in dealings with others in society.

If these intentions were to be met, thorough preparations were needed. Connor (1988) provides an extensive background to the Pastoral Plan in his “Reflections on the Process of Pastoral Plan”. Two of his considerations are relevant to the topic of the present study and discussed below. The first of these is, “the invitation to share in God’s purpose” (Connor 1988:2). The reasoning is that the Church has to first identify the will of God or God’s universal plan for humanity. It concerns the loving plan that God has for humanity, manifested through the centuries. Through God-given talents and capabilities human beings are called upon to offer themselves for human redemption.

Another point made by Connor concerns the “response to the signs of times” (Connor 1988:14-21). The Church, through the Pastoral Plan, had to focus on the present moment and remain relevant, without being afraid of the outside secular world. Connor argues that: “Instead of being a sect, locked in our own dreams and withdrawn into a mini-society of our own, the church flourishes through a continual interplay or dialogue with events outside itself” (1988:14). Here the Church is challenged to deal with current situations and human affairs in ways that may ultimately determine the success or failure of the Church’s evangelisation. At the same time, well informed and independent critical decisions by the Church, not negatively affected by the secular world, have to exist.

Undoubtedly, Southern Africa, at that time faced many challenges involving societal and cultural imbalances that had to be addressed. Rural and urban communities may have different problems requiring different answers. The educated members of the public may prioritize other problematic issues than the uneducated. The Pastoral Plan had to consider these factors and come to a just compromise allowing the Church to function in a balanced manner, treating all members as equals, irrespective of their status. Hence, after it had been implemented a couple of years, Bate (1996) combined experts in various fields, theologians as well as ordinary citizens and asked for their reflections on the Pastoral Plan. Bate also encouraged the Church to be attentive to “Signs of the Spirit in a New (Southern-African) Time” (1996:10-28). Reading the signs of the times through the works of the Spirit was, together with evangelisation, central to the Pastoral Plan.

The Pastoral Plan consists of four parts. Part one (pages 9-14) describes the nature of the plan as “God’s plan” for humanity. It is thus God’s plan that the compilers of the Pastoral Plan wished to follow. The first part deals with such important issues as “love and unity for or with God and one’s neighbour”, “growth by participating in the Pastoral

Plan and reading the signs of the times”, “adaptations per diocese”, and “community life”. The second part (pages 17-25) is concerned with community building with reference to the thought of Christ. It begins with love for God and one’s neighbour and it reflects on what community is. Different ways of expanding spiritual community and ways in which associations can help to build communities are discussed and in this context liturgical celebration, catechism, gospel sharing, the activities of various ministries, a new leadership attitude, and questions related to discrimination and conflict resolution are considered.

In part three of the Pastoral Plan, serving humanity following Christ’s thinking (pages 27-34) is the central theme. Part three offers ideas for making the world into a more human place and for dealing with human needs in parishes whereby everyone is expected to have a task. Part three also mentions special structures that are required for certain needs and it states that overcoming injustice and effecting transformation are among the most pressing issues facing the Church. The last part of the Pastoral Plan is devoted to the practical application of methods for community building (pages 35-43). It focuses on such topics as Small Christian Communities; the Renew process, the formation of Task Groups, the provision of pastoral directives for different Church activities and the need for pastoral analysis and action.

### **The formulation of the Pastoral Plan**

This research was conducted in the Archdiocese of Durban and included some of the people who participated in compiling the plan: its drafting; publication and implementation. They have been interviewed as key figures in the plan’s development and they represent both laity and clergy. They have also experienced the then (apartheid period) and now (post apartheid period). Following are the participants interviewed for the purpose of this research: Mr Paddy Kearney, retired Bishop Fritz Lobinger, Monsignor Paul Nadal, Dr Edwina Ward, Bishop Barry Wood, and Mrs Jabu Zulu.

Lobinger stated that the Pastoral Plan was started in 1975 with the research project known as ETSA (Evangelisation Today in South Africa). Dioceses and other groups came together and discussed their priorities of which the main ones were social justice and lay ministry. This was the first stage.

The second stage took place in 1977 when the declaration of commitment to social justice and race relations within the church was announced. Bishops (SACBC) attended this meeting. A lay woman participant said: “We want a pastoral consultation of all

Catholics” (Lobinger 2016). This was good because it did not come from the clergy but from laity and all who heard the statement thought of it as the way forward.

Two years later, in 1979, pastoral consultation proceedings started. The main request was: “Tell us your needs and priorities” (Lobinger 2016). Bishops were continually included in all the consultations. In 1980 the inter-diocesan pastoral consultation was held in Hammanskraal Seminary (Pretoria). Once again, laity, priests and bishops were present, and out of the discussions about needs and priorities came the reconfirmation of social justice and community ministries as priorities. Kearney stated: “What kind of division between people will your parish have to overcome? And on serving humanity: if your community wants to help build a better world, what can it do?” (2009:265). The name “Pastoral Plan” was not yet used, but the pastoral planning working paper was issued.

The paper was sent out in 1984 to all dioceses. Dioceses were asked to make suggestions, based on the two needs that had already been prioritized, for a pastoral plan that would be used in South Africa. In 1986 the feedback was collected and it indicated as key generative theme “Community Serving Humanity”. Getting back all the responses was not easy because the country went through difficult times and some responses were directed to the socio-political struggles in South Africa rather than to the indicated key theme. Hence in 1987 a reflection kit was compiled for parishes and groups. It consisted of simple questions to be answered by dioceses (diocesan consultations). Kearney (2009), states that it was a thorough and fair consultation. The committee that had been nominated to handle the process produced booklets, posters and training kits to be sent to parishes all over Southern Africa.

In the archdiocese of Durban, Archbishop Denis Hurley issued a statement on the consultation and sent questions to all deacons, parish priests and parish pastoral councils.

In 1988 a detailed plan was compiled with the assistance of bishops, among them McCann and Hurley. However, an appeal arrived for the Pastoral Plan to be simpler and user friendly with drawings. The final launching of the Pastoral Plan took place on Pentecost 1989, at different times and in different dioceses. The review of the Pastoral Plan (evaluation) came after three years in 1992.

Nadal, on meeting the present researcher, looks back on his experience with Archbishop Hurley as his vica-general and briefly summarizes the start of the Pastoral Plan. Hurley

had a vision of how to accommodate the Vatican II appeal of creating a people-based church. The South African Catholic Bishops' Conference thought of it as the church that would be the community of communities centred around the parish, hence the theme "Community Serving Humanity". This was to be extended to include an outreaching to the entire world. Thus the community would serve not only the church but the outside world as well. This is what Bate calls "moving beyond non Catholic circles" (1996:12). Nadal agrees that Lumko (and also Lobinger) was much involved in the planning of the Pastoral Plan which was later approved by the South African Catholic Bishops' Conference.

Kearney tells a slight different story. Although Kearney was not directly involved, he saw a lot of the preparation that went into the Pastoral Plan as he worked with people who were involved in its planning and execution, among them the late emeritus Archbishop Denis Hurley. Through research and his work as a writer he developed a good insight into the Pastoral Plan. In his book "Guardian of the Light", Kearney stresses that the Pastoral Plan (1989) was the response of the South African Catholic Bishops' Conference to the Second Vatican Council, specifically the document "The Church in the Modern World" that asked its servants and followers to work out "how the Church should respond to the social situations. It was the 'see, judge, act' method of Joseph Cardijn" (2009:245) that was used. Nadal (2016) supports that the plan was conceived in response to Vatican II.

It took a long time to produce and implement the Pastoral Plan, Kearney explains, because the South African Catholic Bishops' Conference wanted the document prepared in a participatory way to ensure that the faithful people of God would feel as if they owned it. Some of the inspiration for the Pastoral Plan came from Latin-American bishops and their struggle against extreme inequality and economic injustice and who opted to side with the poor and be their voice (Kearney 2009:245). From 1977 to 1980 consultations took place and all dioceses had to provide information about their needs and priorities. The collaborative work resulted in a first step towards producing the Pastoral Plan and two priorities emerged, social justice and building community. Religious leaders as well as laity were involved, as also Lobinger mentions. To decide on the details, bishops set up a committee chaired by Hurley, to form a Pastoral Plan which should respond to both the internal and external life and affairs of the Church. In 1984 a working paper for a pastoral plan was distributed to all dioceses but "only a hundred replies were received" (Kearney 2009:246). This point is also mentioned by



Lobinger. The results from that paper, says Kearney, were presented at a 1987 bishops' plenary session and in 1989 the Pastoral Plan was published.

In agreement with other interviewees who have provided information to this researcher on how the Pastoral Plan was formulated, Wood states that the Pastoral Plan was first considered when, after ten years of the Second Vatican Council, the Southern African Catholic bishops came back home from the Synod in Rome which was on evangelisation and reflected on the document called the "Evangelisation in the Modern World" (1975). To fulfil what was expected of them, the bishops undertook consultations at various levels in their dioceses and eventually came up with this Pastoral Plan – Community Serving Humanity.

According to Ward, preparations for the Pastoral Plan began when she arrived from Berkeley (California) in August 1986 to look for a job at the chancery (Archdiocese of Durban). She was given a platform to advertise the so-called "Renew Process" that she had studied in Berkeley. The first deanery visited by Ward was Durban South deanery (Umbilo, Assumption parish was the venue). In August 1987 a team of about nine members led by Paul Nadal left the archdiocese for three weeks of intensive "Renew" training in New Jersey. They returned to Durban to implement what they had learned. Tom Kleisslor and Donna Ciangio were the "Renew" trainers in New Jersey, giving meaning to the concepts of "Renew", evangelisation and "small Christian community" (Basic Ecclesia Community).

At the time Denis Hurley, the late archbishop of the Durban archdiocese, was passionate about evangelisation and the kingdom of God, according to Ward. He came up with the idea for what would become the Pastoral Plan and which later was themed "Community Serving Humanity". The theme became the guideline for evangelisation and Renew. The team felt that "Community Serving Humanity" was like the Father, evangelisation was the Son and Renew was like the Holy Spirit.

The last person interviewed on the formulation of the Pastoral Plan was Mrs Zulu. She remembers the year 1989 when the Renew programme was introduced in the archdiocese of Durban. The faithful people of God (*Amakholwa*) were considered to determine what could be done to help them increasing their faith (slightly different in Lobinger and Kearney's references to needs and priorities) as they form the "Small Christian Communities". They needed to meet and support one another in a form of prayer and read the bible in their communities. They would gain from such spiritual

gatherings, even outside the Church premises. Bishops (SACBC) concurred with this approach and saw the need for such gatherings, Zulu said.

Nonetheless, were there other specific needs that communities needed to pray for? Zulu mentions places or communities where people live, fundamental needs both inside and outside the Church and taking into consideration different age groups, and the strength to go out into the world and implement that which was gained from group meetings in the communities. Support should be shown to one another after sharing the insights provided by the Pastoral Plan.

Mrs Zulu was not aware how the Pastoral Plan was started. However she was aware that the Renew Process was implemented within the framework of the Pastoral Plan.

### **The Central Themes:**

#### **Evangelisation**

Reflecting on different aspects of evangelisation, it appeared that specific ministries and Church activities and programmes were especially successful which helped to shape and reshape the Pastoral Plan whereby grateful use was made from past experiences. Among these were for example:

“Christian education of children and adolescents; ministry to youth; adult education in the faith; caring for the sick, the poor and the needy; encouraging vocations to the priesthood and religious life; preparing couples for Christian marriage; enriching marriage and family life; inculturating the liturgy; making parishes self-supporting; training local leaders; building up lay movements; fostering small communities; striving for justice and peace; searching for new ways of spreading the gospel” (SACBC 1989:14).

The interconnection of ministries that are involved in activities and programmes is part of the work of evangelisation. In other words evangelisation, the spreading of the good news of Jesus Christ (Brislin 2013:23) by the Church (missionary when active and evangelizing), has to respond to the signs of the times and be as locally oriented as possible, irrespective of how long it took to become rooted in a community. When the Church became established in Southern Africa, it “had different structures, languages, locations, and priests...” (Bate 1999:17). Nonetheless there was a single focal point which was to keep the gospel continuously on the move so that local populations would be empowered and uplifted. Thus schools and hospitals were built as well as training institutions in response to specific local requirements.

Another form of evangelisation came about as well with the Catholic Church opening its doors to non-Catholics and accepting the conversion of those who expressed a wish to join the Church (Wood 2016 concurs with this). Were such conversions always genuine or were people forced by circumstances such as poverty to opt for joining the Catholic Church? While evangelisation continued, were issues of justice such as decent wages for staff assisting the clergy addressed? Did these people receive any form of compensation? The Church and clergy for many decades have shown justice and support towards the poor and oppressed (there is also Justice and Peace ministry).

In the history of the Church evangelisation seemed to demand that those at the receiving end of the good news converted and abided by the Church's traditions. Brislin (2013:23-24) states that this relates to the endeavour of propagating the faith in non-Christian lands (He was quoting the Missionary work, 16<sup>th</sup> century, famously used by St Ignatius of Loyola). The statement refers to the Church's territorial understanding of its geographical expansion. This notion was valid too for the Church's expansion in Southern Africa where there were a good number of Catholic schools that represented what the Church teaches and believes. However, the question is whether African Catholics were offered any sense of truly belonging and whether they were made aware of their responsibility for transformation. Bate (1999:21) had, long before Brislin (2013), argued that the Church was successful in attracting supporters but among these were few Africans who played leadership roles. Signs that the faith of converts went below the surface were hardly noticeable. The challenge therefore was to come up with a new strategy for evangelisation, more so because there was a demand for local clergy while the lack of African priests would put the future of the Church into jeopardy.

Bate (1999:22) lists four areas of concern that needed to be considered in strategy planning. The first was to offer people a better understanding of their faith, so that it could be deepened. This aspect of evangelisation is called 'the apostolate of Christian doctrine'. A second concern was to look after the urban Africans who had left rural areas to seek employment in the cities. The Church encouraged contacts with organisations and trade unions involved with such city dwellers of rural origin in order to strengthen its approach to evangelisation. The third area of concern referred to catechists who were entrusted with catechetical work to such a degree that they functioned almost as primary evangelisers when priests were not available. Workshops and training were organised that could prepare catechists for employment in the Church. Finally, a special strategy for evangelisation was conceived to invite laity to participate

and commit itself to the Church through the establishment of a Catholic African Union. In this context Small Christian Communities were developed and, where the participation of youth declined, the “Chiro movement” (a Belgian youth movement with a Catholic ethos and a catechetical thrust) was introduced to attract them.

Women sodalities were influential in community evangelisation activities. They played roles in “catechising, visiting the sick, maintaining Catholic standards at home, educating their children in faith and so forth” (Bate 1999:23). This female involvement was a result of the decline of Catholic institutions, for example, some schools were closed in the 1960s and 1970s due to political turmoil in South Africa. Parishes, in which a good number of women were active, began to strengthen their structures in order to assist the clergy with evangelisation. Women were well trained in different “catechetical and ministerial skills” (:24). They dedicated their time and talents, sometimes even their wealth, to look after the Church. Some women accompanied the priests when visiting the poor and sick and others went on their own to represent the Church at sickbeds. Women, most of whom were housewives, became strong pillars of their families, especially when their husbands were away at work.

A point came where the clergy became aware of the need to contextualise evangelisation. The challenge was to sensitively handle people’s cultures. Pope Paul VI had offered his apostolic exhortation (Bate 1999:24) to deal with such a predicament, hence the birth of pastoral regions. For example, IsiXhosa-, IsiZulu-, Setswana- and Sesotho-speakers were recognized as independent groups when their various pastoral needs as communities were defined. The question arose however, if this missionary strategy was perhaps influenced by the group areas act introduced by the South African government during apartheid. The emergence of pastoral regions took place between 1976 and 1984 (:24). Brislin would later (2013:24) comment that some critics thought the idea was “closely associated with colonialism and largely aimed at transplanting the Christendom of Western Europe in new lands considered inferior”. However the main reason was to strengthen people’s faith and bring services (pastoral or ministerial) in their own cultural backgrounds and languages. Hence pastoral regions were, as they still exist today, for brave and well informed local church which serves and responds to people’s needs.

Joining the evangelisation team in the nineties were “lay ministers and married deacons” (Bate 1999:25). The parish councils and lay ministries (societies or sodalities) continued to contribute to the Church which grew in strength as a result of their

engagement in catechism. In both rural and urban areas Small Christian Communities (wards or sections) signal that the laity is continuing to serve humanity. For example, in Taung (a town situated in the Karoo region) Small Christian Communities are involved in a number of projects such as teaching catechism, prayers and songs to children and catechumens and the repairing of bridges and roads (Benz 1996:253) while in the Pretoria archdiocese villages such as Mmakau, Jericho and Maboloka are known because of their engagement in Pastoral Plan activities in their communities (Dusi 1996:265-266).

One result of the Church's evangelisation is that the Church has produced as part of its evangelisation a good number of men and women who followed their vocation so that there are more local ministers in the Church which creates hope for the future Southern African Church. The Pastoral Plan theme of "Community Serving Humanity" and its methods dealing with Small Christian Communities and with the Renew process, using multiple Task Groups, have developed into powerful means of evangelisation supporting the revival of the Church. All the above is testimony to the argument of the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) that mission has to be centred on the evangelisation of people and be based on their situation rather than on territorial considerations. Concluding the present section of the study, evangelisation is today characterized by the following three elements.

The continuing missionary focus on those who have not yet heard the gospel.

The care and attention for those with a strong Christian (Catholic) affiliation who are fervent in their faith and true in Christian living.

The outreach to those whose faith can no longer be defined as living Christianity and who are the focus of the new evangelisation (Brislin 2013:29).

The SACBC still recognizes the effective purposefulness, the success and the importance of the Pastoral Plan (1989). In January 2003 it had to be updated and decisions were made on its current implementation. It was at that moment referred to as the document of evangelisation (McAleer 2013:105). Its aim is still to make the Church into a loving community serving all people. Two SACBC members who have in the past two or three years made use of the Pastoral Plan in their papers are Bishop Kevin Dowling and Cardinal Wilfred Napier. In September 2011 at the pastoral agencies meeting, Bishop Dowling read a paper entitled "Maintaining the Vision" (:109) which was extracted from the Pastoral Plan (1989). In March 2012 Cardinal Wilfred Napier

presented another paper on evangelization in which he spoke about “strategic goals for an evangelizing Church” and asked how they see themselves equipped for this challenge (:110).

### **Community**

The understanding of community in Africa begins with one’s individual upbringing within a family. If families are properly balanced and functional, then there is a good chance that also the communities they form part of will be positive. Good African traditional values implemented within families stimulate profound and necessary behavioural changes in the community, leading to an increased tendency to share, and love and respect each other. Even though real change starts with an individual, the process of growth forces the individual to become more community oriented and to contribute towards his or her community. Onwubiko identifies some of the external forces that influence growth as European education, African culture and Christianity (2001:82). These forces, according to Onwubiko, exist in a complex relationship and assist in building a strong community, including strong African communities.

A crucial point is that, following this notion of evangelisation, it is expected that Christian communities, through dialogue, trust and respect, will break down the barriers that keep them apart. The process of evangelisation will prevail and a new community of believers (the Church) will be formed as, after all, most African countries and the believers and non believers who inhabit them, live today under democratic rule where free dialogue takes precedence. The Catholic Church in Africa engages in dialogue (through SACBC parliamentary liaison) and it still echoes the defensive utterances made on behalf of the community that was “oppressed, voiceless and marginalised” (AE 44). There is now a notion of community, given out by the Church, that the Church is interconnected with the world. Bate (1999:5-6) states there is just one mission which is to participate in the mission of Christ, evangelisation and salvation, passed down to the Church. And there is one Church and it is totally involved with, not separated from, the secular world.

However, speaking of the community in relation to the Catholic Church, the true and perfect community consists in the Church itself that “was concerned to set up social institutions which would allow people to live their lives in the Catholic world, the perfect community, thus avoiding to be tainted by evil of the secular world” (Bate 1999:6). It was very simple: in order to be saved one needed the Catholic Church which

was thought to possess graces and offer means to enter heaven. Hence, “to be within community” meant to be within the Catholic Church and there was a unified Church throughout the world, because of the celebration of Mass in the Latin language.

What links the Pastoral Plan (1989), the Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation (1995), One Mission, Two Churches (1999) and The Church in Mission (2001) in relation to the African understanding of community, is that they acknowledge and encourage the development of South African community relationships. This involves seeking and valuing the African community spirit. In different contexts the Catholic Church has tried to explore and develop various strategies to handle and to strengthen evangelisation in the Southern-African community.

Three concepts - interrelated but each with its own unique character - are helpful in determining what constitutes community. The concepts are all concerned with dealing with people. The first one is liturgy. The Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC 1077-1108) puts it that the liturgy is the work of the Holy Trinity. The Father is source and goal of the liturgy, the Son (Christ) is glorified and the Holy Spirit prepares the faithful for the reception of Christ and teaches them about God the Father.

The primary experience the community requires for the confirmation of its existential identity is liturgy. It denotes how people appreciate, worship, and pray to God. Liturgy is the climax of faith, of what one is, who one believes in, and upon what one's faith is based. The liturgical directives remind one that “Liturgy is the summit towards which the activity of the Church is directed and is also the fount from which all the power flows” (SC 10). Basically this means that liturgy is the source, the beginning, and the end of everything one is in the Church.

Through the liturgy we recognize the presence of God (SC 7), especially in the form of His Son, Jesus Christ, in the Eucharist. The presiding officer at liturgical activities, the minister, also symbolizes the presence of God in the community. When we proclaim the Word, the Scripture, an open heart and a keen understanding of God's will are required. God is present also in Scripture and in the community of the worshipers. Hence liturgy reflects the communal experience, showing community serving humanity. It is crucial to note that, from the time of preparation until the end of liturgical activity, community is involved.

Liturgy is not directed to one person, it is for everybody and it is a celebration. It calls for “full, conscious and active participation” (SC 14). Borello (1991:83) concurs and

states: “Liturgy cannot of itself attain its purpose, since it depends on those who carry it out”. The liturgy’s failure or success, causing joy or disappointment, depends on the participants.

The second concept figuring in determining what constitutes community is catechesis. The Pastoral Plan highlights that “catechesis forms, informs, and transforms the community” (SACBC 1989:21). The catechesis ensures that individuals have the knowledge, necessary for living out their faith. It educates and it strives to affect change in people’s lives. The quality of life lived in the community reflects the quality of teaching at the catechesis. In other words, the teaching in class is practised in the community. The Catechism of the Catholic Church simply puts it that it is “handing on the faith...with a view to initiating the hearers into the fullness of Christian life” (CCC 5). However, Nadal (1991:103) emphasised the point of internal evangelisation, self-evangelisation of the Church. Catechesis is the work of the Church, but people (as the Church) teach what they know and what they believe to be correct in relation to their faith. Self conviction thus comes first before as Church members set out to teach others. The Church shares and gives from what it has.

The backbone of Church and faith is catechesis. The deepening of faith and on-going formation is crucial, especially for those who have taken a step back from their religious conviction or whose faith has lapsed. Catechesis is not merely for children or young people but it “is fundamental if the community is to be fully aware of what it is doing, actively engaged in the rite and enriched by its effects” (The Liturgy 11).

The third concept is that of the gospel. The gospel opens the horizons of teaching and a fundamental consideration is that sharing the scripture leads to the building of community. The word of God pulls together the community and encourages the love of neighbour. Hirmer and Prior (1991:120-121) present five points that assist in understanding gospel sharing as a way of building community. These points are:

Listening deeply to find out how Christ means people to live.

Forming a community around Christ: Sharing helps believers to grow together into a community around Christ.

A new leadership style: leadership has to inspire, enable, respect and serve the members of the community.



A serving community is needed to detect pressing needs in its midst, whether these are of a social, political, economical, psychological or spiritual nature.

Liturgies, for example the parish Sunday liturgy, have to be well prepared.

By putting the gospel into practise, an effective form of evangelisation takes place as this demonstrates that there is a link between the gospel and real life situations or experiences. The Pastoral Plan points out that “linking the gospel and our life situation will also help ensure that the gospel-sharing group does not become inward looking but rather a Community Serving Humanity” (SACBC 1989:22). It is good always to have in mind that God is the author of the sacred scripture and the source of its inspiration and truth, Christ is the unique word in the sacred scripture, and the Holy Spirit is its interpreter (CCC 101-114).

### **Conclusion**

The Pastoral Plan (1989) describes the Christian community by mentioning two elements: First, that the building of community is not based on human urge but willed by God and God’s model for human community was the divine community of Father, Son and Holy Spirit (SACBC 1989:17). However, the image of God is mysteriously hidden in human beings as they are created in His image (Genesis 2:7). The second element is that the new human community was established through, and built around, Jesus Christ himself and it has two distinctive features: “Love of God and love of one another” (SACBC 1989:17). Hence, the Catholic Church in Southern Africa strives for love and unity.

Historically the Pastoral Plan (1989) came about through diocesan synods which assisted bishops in their different territories to consult lay experts about the well being of the laity in the dioceses. These same diocesan structures assisted in the preparations for the Pastoral Plan. The plan results from the vision of the SACBC that the Church had to be based on Christ’s plan for the life of the Church (SACBC 1989:5). Thereto the Church would have to remove boundaries and barriers to reach out to its members and to people in general. Another aim was the creation of a new true Church community where everyone would have a sense of belonging (SACBC 1989:7) and where all people would be served (SACBC 1989:7), hence the central importance of evangelisation (Brislin 2013:23). This evangelisation comprised liturgy, catechesis and gospel sharing.

The formulation of the Pastoral Plan took account of two priorities which were the establishment of social justice and lay ministries (Lobinger 2016). Between 1977 and 1989 consultations took place which resulted in the publication of the Pastoral Plan and its theme, “Community Serving Humanity”. However, it looks as if the laity is not fully knowledgeable on the formation of the Pastoral Plan.

Through the shift in evangelisation and a better understanding of community by both the Church and Africans, the Church gradually changed to a Church that is connected in all its facets with the contemporary secular world. To belong to this Church one had first to belong to community at all its levels (from top to bottom) while in the African understanding family or home took priority and thereafter came belonging to the community (from bottom to top).

The following chapter will throw some light on how the Pastoral Plan was implemented.

### **Introduction**

Chapter three is concerned with serving as a central theme of the Pastoral Plan. The kind of serving desired is the one that is modelled on God who, through Jesus Christ, showed to be a serving God while also his Son came on the world to serve. The body of Christ, which is the Church, wishes to become a serving community, but it means to serve without restrictions and limits, serving all human beings irrespective of skin colour and religious affiliation. All humans deserve service. The Second Vatican council stated that “the Church desires nothing more ardently than to develop itself untrammelled in the service of all” (GS 42).

The Church has formed and transformed various institutions to improve services such as the provision of education and health systems. All services rendered by the Church are directed towards humanity which is at the heart of the Church and forms its primary interest. As the SACBC states, “schools and universities, health care for the sick, orphanages for those without family, sustenance for those without food, shelter for those without homes” (SACBC 1989:29). Such institutionalized services are a continuous part of the Pastoral Plan vision which is one of transformation and a better, more human world. But the service offered to humanity may also be advanced by gospel preaching, prayer, catechism, liturgy and sacraments.

Chapter three consists of one topic (excluding the introduction and conclusion). The topic is concerned with implementation and participation in serving but there are three subtopics that consolidate the participatory role of the Church in serving. The subtopics are the call and ministry to serve, the factors in implementing the Pastoral Plan and its reception in the Southern African Catholic Church.

### **Implementation and Participation - Serving**

The participatory role of the Church consists in serving in the form of evangelisation. The Catholic Church when serving humanity engages with community and implements the Pastoral Plan in its entirety, including the concepts of Small Christian Communities, the Renew Process and Task Groups. Clergy, theologians, lay associations and everyone else who partakes in religious life (the religious) are all expected to participate in the service of humanity and, thus, to ensure the positive reception of the Pastoral Plan in the Southern African Catholic Church.

## **The Call and Ministry to Serve**

Setting the tone for a discussion of service, Earle begins his study *Becoming a Creative Local Church*, by citing Pastoral Plan topics such as 13. Ministries can create community, 20. Every parish must learn to detect human needs, 21. Meeting human needs is the task of all, and 22. Some needs require special structures (1991:146-148). The topics accentuate the need for a serving community and implore people to truly participate in, and belong to, the community by reacting and responding to community requirements, by acting together with others for a better world and to be involved in groups and committees. In short, the call and ministry to serve is a crucial “part of our calling as Christians, an important part of our service to humanity” (SACBC 1989:29). The Church has to hold up love, unity, peace and respect as vital focal points for its members. Salvation, at the centre of the Church, is common to everyone who joins the Church and becomes a child of God.

“Serving humanity” is a difficult concept but one that the Pastoral Plan urges the faithful to strive for. They have to work towards it, showing the spirit of love and of service to others. Among the groups that work among and represent communities are commissions for justice and peace, family apostolate concerned with family life, mission aid societies such as St Vincent De Paul society that feeds the hungry and looks after the sick and community development committees. These groups aim “to overcome discrimination and inequalities” (SACBC 1989:33).

However, when we are called upon to positively respond, we often resist and offer reasons why it should not be us engaging in serving humanity. We mention our weaknesses and also we doubt the Spirit of the One who calls and sends us to His people. This may signal that we need God in our ministries and cannot rely on ourselves. We need to spend more time with God and ask him what we should do, praying and reading the gospel. In that case the service we render is that through prayer we are enabled to continue with our ministries.

Serving is love and as such it is the essence of two pillars of the Pastoral Plan, namely community and humanity, which are the new commandment (Earle 1991:150). For ourselves to be able to participate with a sincere heart and good understanding in the provisions of the Pastoral Plan, we may have to face hatred, tension, divisions, barriers, brutality - and we may conquer. Love would take us through it all, even to the point of engulfing enemies and strangers. It is all about working together for the good of

humanity. The Holy Spirit is there to inspire us to serve and to make us reflect critically upon our ministries.

### **The Factors in Implementing the Pastoral Plan**

Dealing with the implementation of the Pastoral Plan compilers found that ideas came up for practical ways to build the community (SACBC 1989:35). According to the Pastoral Plan the first form of community serving humanity is through the concept of “Small Christian Communities”. O’Halloran speaks of a community of “combine into larger units to form a communion of communities” (2002:166). “Small Christian Communities” are neighbourhood communities with the purpose of being permanent. In some parishes “Small Christian Communities” are referred to as ward or section communities. Members meet weekly, every time in a different home. The Small Christian Communities are based on gospel reading, reflection on gospel values, sharing the gospel, praying for different needs and the carrying out of other communal activities. In order for the implementation of the Pastoral Plan to be clearly understood, were people divided into groups, perhaps according to age? Mrs Jabu Zulu (2016) said that there were no age limits, no division into groups, and no racial discrimination and that only a simple Christianity was required. At the Emmanuel Cathedral the Small Christian Communities and Renew process (lately known as “follow me” groups) took off when parents were asked to form groups and share scriptural passages while they were waiting for their children’s catechism classes to end.

What is it that brings the Pastoral Plan to life and that ensure communication between faithful and bishops? Mrs Zulu mentioned that things were simplified by following seven steps which are: opening prayer, welcome, scripture reading, reflection, sharing, intercessions, and closing prayer. This is the pattern followed at prayer sessions which are central to bible reflections or readings. The Word of God must be brought to life and the faithful share it by living it out in their daily lives which is the indirect implementation of the Pastoral Plan. We are to support each other as neighbours, said Mrs Zulu.

According to Mrs Zulu the Pastoral Plan was alive in the archdiocese of Durban by the implementation of the Renew process. Mrs Zulu saw prayer and gospel (scripture) reading as enhancing the vitality of the Pastoral Plan, also when done in Small Christian Communities.

In answer to the question what gave life to the Pastoral Plan retired Bishop Fritz Lobinger said that in rural areas Small Christian Communities were preferred. Each diocese had to choose for itself how to implement the Pastoral Plan and bring it to life. This is in fact the South African Catholic bishops' recommendation.

Sharing the views of Lobinger, Bishop Barry Wood (2016) explained that the implementation of the Pastoral Plan by the Small Christian Communities was based on their training by the Lumko Institute (Lobinger was a member of the Lumko training team). Edwina Ward (2016) observed that the Pastoral Plan was brought to life simply by trained parish team leaders. In a follow-up programme of the Pastoral Plan the archdiocese of Durban fought the HIV/AIDS epidemic by opening the Sinosizo clinic which also trained people for home-based care. Catholic schools throughout the area of the Bishops' Conference opened their doors to all races. Central concerns, highlighted by the synod of bishops and the SACBC, were HIV/AIDS, unemployment and poverty. Projects to alleviate poverty include soup kitchens (in St Clement, Clermont) and Nkosinathi (at the Emmanuel Cathedral). Resource centres and computer skills training were organised with Diakonia aid to counter unemployment.

The leaders of Small Christian Communities report to parish priests and parish pastoral councils. The membership is open to everyone in the parish, young and old. Catholics (and non-Catholics) are free to join and participate in Small Christian Communities. Therefore the Pastoral Plan, through Small Christian Communities, embraces other denominations. Whether in an urban or a rural environment, these Small Christian Communities develop well, catering for different needs and interests. Small Christian Communities respond to the specific needs and demands of their own local community and when they gather time plays no role as long as the purposes of the meeting are served.

The second part of the Pastoral Plan is the Renew process. The Renew process began in 1978 as a diocesan programme for the archdiocese of Newark in the United States. It spread to many parts of the globe, including Southern Africa. The Renew process is a spiritual renewal process that creates a closer relationship with Christ. It increases adult commitment to Jesus, it reaffirms Jesus' central position in people's lives and it releases new power of the Holy Spirit (SACBC 1989:38). In summary, Renew process closes the gap between normal daily life and professed faith. It makes Christianity into the way of life.

The crucial point of the Renew process is that it works from top to bottom, from diocesan team to parish and it is done on a seasonal basis. Kearney stated that it “extends over three years, with an initial six-month preparation followed by five six-week sessions, offered twice a year” (2009:266). Each season has a theme as a focal point for evangelisation for everyone. The Renew process also promotes Small Christian Communities and emphasises the spirit of prayer and organisation. It is important that prayer gatherings are properly organized and contribute towards spiritual growth. “Renew” offers fundamental formation in prayer, scripture, community building, action for justice, liturgy, evangelisation, family life, and support for adults wanting to become Catholics (Kearney 2009:266).

The Renew process is according to Lobinger mainly used for city parishes. It was initially not taken seriously but considered as an American idea that was unlikely to fit in Africa (Nadal agreed with Lobinger on this point). However, those sent to America for training came back to Africanize the Renew process and Nadal was one of them. With the review process, entailing the evaluation of the Pastoral Plan, taking place in 1992, the steering committee asked for feedback and communicated the necessary information to all dioceses. Lobinger who was a member of the steering committee was interested in the establishment of Small Christian Communities while Bill Pitcavage (SCJ Priest) was in favour of the Renew process. The feedback received indicated clearly that Small Christian Communities were mainly favoured by rural dioceses while urban parishes were appreciative of the Renew process.

In this researcher’s interview with Nadal (2016), the interviewee spoke about the fundamental ideas that led to the development of the Renew process. After the approval of the Pastoral Plan, the bishops had to execute it, but how could it be done? Hurley had heard of the successful Renew process led by Monsignor Clasca in New Jersey. He went to America to make enquires. He met Clasca and Sister Donna (a Dominican sister) and he was very impressed. They emphasised the point of Renew being a process, meaning that it wasn’t a programme that at some moment in time comes to an end. It was an ongoing process.

When Hurley came back, much in favour of the Renew process, deaneries were consulted but most were doubtful because it was seen as an American programme (as mentioned above by Lobinger) and most rural parishes where the majority of parishioners were illiterate would not be able to cope with it. Some suggested that

parishes should be divided in urban and rural parishes and there should be different programmes for each. Diakonia (under the leadership of Paddy Kearney) disapproved of this suggestion and insisted on one and the same programme for everyone.

It was decided to de-Americanise the whole Renew process to make it suitable for South Africans. The first step towards localising Renew was to deal with the language in so far as it was foreign and not easily locally understood. There was a team of nine persons involved, clergy and laity representatives and the team was sent to America for training. This was in July 1987.

On its return the team had to convince the whole archdiocese of Durban that Renew was the way to go in implementing the Pastoral Plan in the region. The central idea was to make of Renew not something practised by individuals but to ensure the commitment of the entire archdiocese. As the Pastoral Plan puts it: “We wish catechesis to become the task of the community, not only the task for its leaders. It should be the task not of the few but of many. We wish catechesis to include not only the children of the parish. All its members should become part of a continual learning process which clarifies and deepens their faith” (SACBC 1989: 21). Various deaneries were visited to get approval from the parishes. The team created a working group (Paul Nadal, Andy Piper, Edwina Ward and Francis Howlette) that concentrated on fully adapting Renew to local situations while adhering to the Pastoral Plan vision. Finally, after all deaneries and parishes had been visited and provided responses, the archdiocese in 1989 had a “kick off Sunday” (Nadal 2016) at the West Ridge stadium. About thirteen thousand persons attended and Monsignor Clasca had come to South Africa for the occasion.

As regards the Renew process itself, it divided the year into five or six seasons, each of which had a theme. For example:

Season 1	Spring Year I	The Lord’s call
Season 2	Lent Year II	Our response to the Lord’s call
Season 3	Spring Year II	Empowerment by the Spirit
Season 4	Lent Year III	Discipleship
Season 5	Spring Year III	Evangelisation

(SACBC 1989: 38)



Each deanery organised a team that would travel around to others. Each parish also had a training team which consisted not just of parish pastoral council members, but of eight or nine ordinary parishioners. However, some deaneries and parishes were not keen to adopt the Renew process. In some cases the clergy refused to give people permission to participate and they were secretly given the material to follow the Renew process at their homes.

The archdiocese of Durban came to life with the Renew process and about six thousand persons began to meet regularly in about six hundred faith sharing groups. The strength of the process lay in the training and sharing material offered to participants. It was fully practised for three years, from 1989 until 1991 when there were changes in the leadership and administration of the archdiocese. As a result the Renew process started fading away. Hurley retired and at the time there was no follow up programme. A “follow me” (Nadal 2016) programme had been implemented that in some way was somehow a continuation of the Renew process but it was not as properly organised as the Renew process.

Mthethwa (in Kearney 2009: 267) mentions the clear guidelines and training for all parish leaders that characterized the Renew process. It was thus beneficial both on a personal and communal level. The material provided and the workshops held in dioceses simplified the Renew process.

Kearney who worked with Hurley and experienced first-hand how the archdiocese of Durban chose to adopt the Renew process for the sake of realising the Pastoral Plan, writes that various other dioceses chose to follow the Small Christian Communities approach. Hurley had learned from overseas bishops how Renew could help “to develop community, strengthen faith and inspire more active witness to Jesus and his message” (Kearney 2009:266). Hurley made sure that knowledge of the Renew process was spread throughout the archdiocese. He spoke about it at clergy study days, archdiocesan pastoral council gatherings, in his sermons when he visited parishes for confirmation and on other special occasions. He appealed to all Church members to become involved and participate in the Renew process for personal and communal gain.

However, the Umvoti deanery was reluctant to participate. The clergy in the deanery thought that Renew because of its American origin would not be suitable for rural IsiZulu parishes. Nadal (2016) confirms this and states that the local people insisted on

being incorporated into the Renew process. After some adaptations the deanery accepted the programme.

The Renew process was launched on 30 July 1989 and about twelve thousand people of different races attended the launch (Ward gives an estimate of thirteen thousand). As also Ward mentions, every participating parish was given *umsinsi* (coral) tree to take and plant in their parish yard. In the majority of parishes it continues to grow. It was amazing that some Anglican dioceses also got involved and received training on the Renew process.

While the launch of Renew was prepared, five seasons were announced, in both IsiZulu and English. The launch was in the Westridge Tennis Stadium. Each South-African diocese that participated in Renew had to choose a logo and a tree. In what was then the Transvaal for example, the jacaranda tree was chosen. The archdiocese of Durban chose *umsinsi* (coral tree). Ninety-seven parishes attended, coming with their beautiful brightly coloured banners. Each parish went back with a pot plant containing their chosen tree.

In the end, ninety-four out of the ninety-seven parishes took part in Renew, says Ward (2016). Three parishes missed out because of one the parish priest died and of the others the parish priests maintained that Renew was too American even though all the material had been adapted and translated for local use. There were two teams, the Diocesan Renew Team (with Paul Nadal, Lawrence Mthethwa, Andy Piper, and Edwina Ward) and the Parish Renew Team, who they trained as members of parish teams to function as small group team leaders.

What made the Pastoral Plan a success was ultimately the training of parish team leaders. It was all about the Renew process that created a lively religious awareness in most dioceses. Each season had its own colour and lasted five or six weeks. There was also a prayer for Renew. The seven-step prayer was concerned with how to control a group and, as a leader, allow people to participate by encouraging those who are too shy to talk while keeping to the subject. Everyone was trained.

The fast tracking of training and sharing “seasonal” materials in the rural areas was never a problem, according to Ward. Rural parishes could take their time and work through the material at their own pace, even if it meant taking six months for a six-week

set of material. Nadal concurred that the timing factor played no role, as long as the participants gained something from the Renew process.

The third and last way of implementing the Pastoral Plan involved Task Groups. Task Groups contributed towards community building, but in a slightly different way from Small Christian Community and Renew process. Those who enjoyed challenges and active participation could join Task Groups. Task Groups focused on community tasks that required execution and carried them out through lay ministries. In some parishes Task Groups were an extension of existing parish groups who aimed to improve parish life. Not only could these group activities be spiritually focused, but they could also involve general care such as feeding the poor. The groups are simply “work-orientated” (SACBC 1989:39).

Task Groups were meant to increase in number and membership, allowing as many parishioners as possible to join. This was to encourage full active participation in the parishes. All parishioners were welcome and encouraged to join, including the less interested and the sick. For the success of these parish groups the following steps need to be taken.

1. Introducing the leaders of Task Groups to making the change from a task group mentality to a relationship mentality.
2. Training existing leaders in community building skills and attitudes.
3. Sharing the vision of the groups with the whole parish.
4. Establishing multiple Task Groups.
5. Training the Task Groups in skills and in relationships as well as in social responsibility (SACBC 1989:40).

It is essential that the community chooses which of the above-mentioned community building methods is suitable for them. The methods offer help with deciding on thoughtful responses to community requirements. However, according to Lobinger (2016), unfortunately no diocese opted for Task Groups.

As far as the reception and the relevance of the Pastoral Plan is concerned, Mrs Zulu considered the Pastoral Plan as the foundation for the still existing Small Christian Communities which continue to be effective. The Pastoral Plan presents the knowledge of the Catholic faith which is simplified and made practical. The leadership in all Christian communities learn from the Pastoral Plan and are encouraged to remain

humble and allow others to share and gain from the Pastoral Plan. Small Christian Communities are meant to make others feel at ease in small groups and honestly share without any intimidation.

Lobinger, when considering the present relevance of the Pastoral Plan, touched the issue of social justice. The Pastoral Plan took off during the apartheid era in South Africa, and it had to address questions of social justice. Although apartheid is gone racial tension still exists and calls for the Pastoral Plan to combat it as it did before. Wood agreed and said that the church can still do more to fight racism in the communities. Mrs Zulu is in agreement, although partially, but sees a lot of positive change in so far as this issue is concerned. She said people are free to join Small Christian Communities nowadays because of multi-racial neighbourhoods.

In Lobinger's opinion the pastoral ministry entailed in the plan is still very much in existence and relevant, although not as the number one institution and not as influential as it was before. He points at what known to be corroborative work or ministry where lay ministers participate and lead services in the absence of clergy. Noticed however is the slight change in priorities:

1. Financial reliance (self supporting), instead of social justice.
2. Lay or community ministries.

Nadal answered with a very positive "yes" to the question on the contemporary relevance of the Pastoral Plan. "Yes, but we need a very effective archdiocesan team of both IsiZulu and English communities to channel or drive the Pastoral Plan". Somehow such a team should revive the Pastoral Plan and its objectives. It should also provide material to be issued to all parishes. There was such a team previously but it was not as effective as expected. The theme for Community Serving Humanity was picked up at the Archdiocesan Synod in 2007 when it emphasized personal Renew, parish Renew and outreach to others. This is the point where Community Serving Humanity is at today.

Also Kearney answered in the affirmative. According to Kearney there are today strongly built communities because of the Pastoral Plan. To strengthen his point Kearney mentioned the encyclical letter of the Holy Father Francis on care for our common home (the earth) which dealt with the declining quality of human life and the

breakdown of society (Laudato Si 2015:27-37). The Pastoral Plan may help to resuscitate humanity and its world.

There is also the Hurley legacy, the Denis Hurley Centre, which has made a huge difference in many lives. The centre runs various projects that are explicitly linked to the Pastoral Plan, its implementation and its relevance. There is a feeding scheme for the homeless and poor which is open every day except on Thursdays and Saturdays. The staff and volunteers serve breakfast and lunch. Thursdays are reserved for doing laundry and bathing, while Saturdays are set aside for men's clinic and workshops or lectures on various life skills projects that could benefit the homeless and poor. There is bible sharing on Wednesdays in the centre in which some Cathedral parishioners take part.

The clinic is run by doctors and nurses as retired volunteers. They serve in a dignified manner, giving of their knowledge with an understanding of the needs of those who cannot afford medical aid and health facilities. Another project the centre runs is a sewing group which teaches people who have an interest in sewing and wish to assist the poor. A group that primarily looks for a safe and legal place to stay is the refugee pastoral care group that helps refugees in and around Durban city. Lessons in IsiZulu and English are available for those who need a basic knowledge of the two official local languages. Shelter is provided for destitute refugees who are new in the city until they are ready to look after themselves and their families. Once again Cathedral parishioners are on board, acting out their vision statement and being 'community serving humanity'.

As regards the relevance of the Pastoral Plan today it is Wood's opinion that the Church has come a long way becoming a community that serves humanity. "We are part of the world and we need to reach out to the world. The Church's ministries are open to all. And the ecumenical movement or centre called Diakonia Council of Churches was established by Hurley around the time when the Pastoral Plan was prepared" (Wood 2016).

The relevance of the Pastoral Plan has been shown, in Kearney's view, by the breaking down of racial barriers or tension and by an increased sense of unity. "The Pastoral Plan encourages us to welcome all in the local churches" (Kearney 2016). This includes the refugees who receive care in the Denis Hurley Centre.

Ward, confirming the contemporary relevance of the Pastoral Plan, says that it remains the core for community life as she refers to the Small Christian Communities programme. She agrees with Mrs Zulu that the plan can still bring people together as it

did in the past. Ward emphasizes the image of the Church by Lumko, with the picture of the church in the middle and the people around it, arrows pointing in different directions indicating that people are expected to go out after they have gathered strengths in the church, to serve others. That is why the theme, Community Serving Humanity, which has the idea of outreach.

What is missing today, according to Ward, is an ongoing formation of both parishioners and clergy. The renewed vitalisation of the parish priests who can make or break the Pastoral Plan and the Renew process is urgently required. A present “adult formation team” has tried to change Small Christian Communities into Family Life teams, with the aim of reviving Renew, but it has failed, perhaps because of lack of support from the clergy or parishioners.

### **Pastoral Plan Reception within the Southern African Catholic Church**

In this part of the study the present researcher takes a look at perspectives on the Pastoral Plan offered by the clergy; theologians, participants in religious life; laity and associations. All these have valuable opinions on the reception of the Pastoral Plan in the Southern African Catholic Church.

The clergy has to be united and in full agreement before it embarks on any attempt to build a community. Among clergy we count bishops, priests and deacons. The clergy, together with the people they serve, is in solidarity with intentions to build communities and with ways of doing so, having Christ (or evangelizing) in mind. The barriers dividing and alienating the clergy from lay brothers and sisters should be broken down. However the initiative to do so must come from the clergy. The clergy could for this purpose put the Pastoral Plan into action and serve the people irrespective of their identity. In each face they look at, the clergy should see the face of God and fulfil the mission God has given them (*Missio Dei*).

This asks from the clergy to embrace humility and to refrain from dominating. Such a position has indeed become a reality as a result of the implementation of the Pastoral Plan (Small Christian Communities, Renew Process, and Task Groups). The plan and its implementation ensure that no one is dominated by the clergy but all participate fully and as equals. Thus the clergy resembles Christ in whose priesthood they share. Christ came not to be served but to serve and to give his life. The clergy aims to inspire

communities to fully and actively participate in the service of humanity while advancing unity.

Sipuka echoes this view on the clergy's duty to build up communities and highlights the clergy's preaching or proclaiming of the Word, especially as priests in their respective parishes (2013:43-44). He takes preaching as including evangelisation and catechesis - evangelisation in the sense of preaching conversion and the growth of faith. Dusi (1996:266) also had previously discussed teaching or preaching from a catechetical point of view, reflecting on the Pastoral Plan as giving strength in the journeys of faith and conversion that take place in community. Thus the Pastoral Plan remains relevant, both in a quantitative and a qualitative sense.

Quantitative implies making Christ known to those who do not know him yet or converting followers of other religions to Christianity, thus increasing the number of Christians. The Pastoral Plan (1989:19) itself gives three ways of increasing community spirit and numbers of followers: through Small Christian Communities, the Renew process and Task Groups. On the other hand, the Pastoral Plan's qualitative benefits lies in its effect of deepening faith and religious understanding and making it effective in daily activities (Sipuka 2013:45).

When it comes to Catechesis, a systematic and sound programme for passing on faith is required. Basically it is about grounding and deepening faith which involves a culture of worship (liturgy), devotions (prayers) and sound doctrines (traditions). The clergy ought to remember that they are the chief catechists. They teach what they believe and they pass on their strong positive conviction. SACBC (2012:20) mentions the necessity for the clergy to build their communities through the preaching of the Word: Priests, as collaborators of the bishop, and as pastors and educators of the Christian community, have as one of their most pressing duties that of discerning the vocation of future catechists and attending to their formation and training (in Sipuka 2013:48).

But it is not sufficient to be merely a preacher. The clergy also has to have the qualities, the attitude and the spirituality, needed for their ministry of uniting communities to be successful (Sipuka 2013:49-56). The qualities required include personal faith experience. Somehow this may refer to an individual or personal encounter with the one they proclaim. Not only are the clergy expected to set good examples, but also to offer or preach from their own personal faith. In other words, they give what they have. The

late Pope John Paul II mentioned that the clergy has “to be and to act ... in the spirit and style of Jesus the Good Shepherd” (PDV: 73).

Quoting from various sources is considered good and necessary and it can strengthen the arguments used in preaching and the preaching itself. The clergy also needs a zeal for evangelisation or, in other words, a love for the mission of proclaiming the good news. A third requirement is love for the people one is preaching to. This kind of love is paired with concern and compassion for people.

The clergy also has to preach relevantly. Thereto, the clergy has to know people’s concerns, their worries, joys and sorrows. Making home visits and receiving people in the office for various reasons, for example counselling, are effective ways for getting to know them and their circumstances and to offer relevant preaching. A priority and a crucial part of getting to know people, is to know their languages and cultures. The clergy has to make determined efforts in that direction. A final point would concern preaching prophetically. This refers to daring to touch on fearful topics and on sensitive situations and, if necessary, to correct people and help them to transform their understanding. It means that the preacher may risk damaging his reputation and losing love from his parishioners because he insists on certain gospel values. In this context topics that may come up for discussion are relationships (sex and sexuality), greed (the opposition between rich and poor), corruption (fair distributions of basic necessities), employment, etc.

Sipuka, as one of the SACBC members, supports the Pastoral Plan and praises the clergy for positively and in various ways referring to it as they proclaim the good news. Dlungwane however remarks that, if the clergy wants to be relevant and alert in their ministry, it has to embrace the fact that the Pastoral Plan is an ongoing process (2013:335). He points out that the Church keeps receiving information that some members of the clergy are lacking in focus on their ministry. Hence, it is positive that the implication of the Pastoral Plan remains ongoing, raising hopes that the aim of Community Serving Humanity will be fulfilled. The views of one theologian on the reception of the Pastoral Plan in Southern Africa were considered for the purpose of the present study.

It concerns Langefeld (1996) who, sharing his thoughts on the Pastoral Plan and Reconstruction and Development in Southern Africa, emphasized that one needs to read the signs of the times (SACBC 2014, calls it discernment of the signs of the Spirit).



Langefeld offers his view that, as we become attentive to the signs of the times, “the Christian community is able to clarify its mission of witnessing to, worshiping and serving God’s Spirit in the world” (Langefeld 1996:97). This is how we arrive at the priorities that shape our Christian lives and practices. The fulfilment of God’s mission is expressed in the way we serve one another. In South Africa, moving beyond apartheid and entering into the democratic era, much reconstruction and development has taken place, not only in the socio-political arenas but also spiritually.

Brislin proposes a “new evangelisation...to incarnate the faith in own environment and proclaim it to other groups” (Brislin 2013:28). Brislin is backed up by the SACBC (2014) in offering a new way of evangelizing that moves beyond the spiritual and is a witness to the world of the prophetic and transforming power. This notion of transformation includes land reform, reconstruction and development. Mogab (2015:1-4) disputes not poverty and discrimination (or inequality), but rather presents issues pertaining to land reform. She encourages land reform implementation because it can reduce inequality and alleviate unnecessary poverty.

In Southern Africa, the land issue (and land owned by missionaries) remains critical in the post-colonial era and, if not dealt with properly, it may endanger human dignity and the availability of fundamental necessities such as shelter, food and employment. The SACBC shares common views on respect for human dignity. Mogab’s analysis presents useful contexts for this research because she uses Brazil as the topic of her case study and South Africa, like Brazil, is one of the BRICS countries.

Matondi (2010:1) makes a point that is relevant to the present study, namely that, where land reform in rural areas is concerned, one should not overlook traditional leaders. According to Matondi traditional leaders have to be recognized as custodians of the land, and as responsible for community governance and for cultural issues. Although he uses Mazowe District in Zimbabwe for his case study, his conclusions apply to much of Southern Africa where too there are rural areas that require the speedily processing of land reform. Traditional leaders play a vital role in such processes and their authority should not be undermined.

Ackermann (2001), in her reflection on Southern Africa’s political history, draws the conclusion that more needs to be done to address the hurt that was caused by seeking the common good like justice, equal rights and peace. She advocates for healing painful memories so that former opponents can together participate in evangelisation.

Ackermann suggests, in other words, that our attention gets redirected from land issues to spiritual necessities. Mouat (1996) concurs with Ackermann, speaking of healing from the ministerial point of view of pastoral care and counselling. She pleads for a theology that offers meaningful ideas to people. Her reflections emphasize the post-apartheid era where communities and individuals “continue to be in desperate need of total healing, not just from physical ills, but from social, psychological, emotional, and spiritual afflictions” (Mouat 1996:239, see also Lartey 2003:62). In summary, healing ministry is concerned with protecting life and liberation theology.

“Religious Life” by Wigley described as a calling “to be community, create community and serve the people...” (2013:297). What transpires from Wigley’s statement is that it takes community to serve community. It is within the parameters of community that the community is able to serve itself and its needs. “Religious life” is able to advance such communities and to execute the work required. Religious communities look after the welfare of people in various areas and they assist bishops and the general Church leadership by spreading the good news of Christ (the *Missio Dei* element).

Following are some of the religious engagements with communities:

“Religious are active in parishes, schools, NGO’s, hospices, day care institutions, in the areas of trafficking in persons, justice and peace, refugee work, catechetics, education at every level, in clinics, vestment and host making, ecological concerns, health care, art activities, spiritual direction, providing opportunities for retreats and sabbaticals, providing bookshops and a variety of other ministries that further the healing mission of Jesus Christ” (Wigley 2013:297).

In the context of the SACBC priority, “Community Serving Humanity”, religious workers (congregations) have to make some adjustments. The first is to accept prophetic faith which will help with enduring and dealing with problems of a social and religious nature. A crucial point in the engagements of church and religious workers is the need for dialogue. Following is an adjustment to match charisma to SACBC priorities. Although charisma depicts founding purposes and mission for each religious order or congregation, they have to honour and advance local priorities. What the bishops may desire for their people, is made into a reality by those living religious lives. They have to be able to reflect on and respond to the needs of the times. They need to read the signs of the times and be relevant when delivering their messages. They do not impose their talents, skills and ideas, but these may be relevant when they plan, together with communities, how specific tasks or themes may be beneficial for communities they

serve. Collaborative ministry is not only expected to be practised within religious groups but also in respect of communities served. Unity has to prevail at all times and levels, even tensions exist between religious congregations and, for example, the SACBC. Such tensions could arise over such questions as looking after or advocating justice for the vulnerable, including women and children.

Hirmer, commenting on religious life (the consecrated life), calls it a great treasure which is at the service of the people, caring for the poor and the sick, and educating youth and adults (2007:128). Those involved in the religious life share the evangelizing task of the Church.

Other groups involved in the Pastoral Plan are the laity and associations. These are also called sodalities or movements. The main reason for their involvement is that the SACBC wished to ensure that the theme reached a maximum number of people and would create positive attitudes in all communities. People were and continue to be encouraged by their lay associations to experience the ‘Community Serving Humanity’ theme and to extend the community of believers. In this context the activities of Small Christian Communities, the Renew process and Task Groups were vital. Members of lay associations are free to choose and make use of the services of any of these three groups.

The establishment of lay ministries also needs to be acknowledged as these help create, maintain and advance communities. Some of the lay ministries are concerned with visiting the sick in the community or ward, offering catechesis, liturgy, counselling, address questions of justice and peace, while there is also a maintenance team. For lay ministries to be successful and appreciated the SACBC mentioned two conditions: they had to be rooted in their communities and avoid all forms of monopolising and status seeking (1989:22) as these block community building and the growth of communality. To avoid monopolising and status seeking, any given tasks should be distributed among community members and when making decisions all community members should be involved. Leadership of lay associations should periodically be changed. This would not only create a profound sense of belonging among all community members, but it would also lead to well informed decisions as a result of community inputs and discussions.

Each community member is important and in each and every lay association members have to be aware of that. Respect and acknowledgment of members’ presence during meetings helps to boost this sense of belonging. The SACBC (1989:41) requested that

lay associations would study and implement the Pastoral Plan, but associations needed to make a number of adjustments so that they could reach as many people as possible. It goes without saying that all community members are expected to take an active part in community building, irrespective of whether they belong to any association or not.

By responding to the Pastoral Plan in this way it was no longer the responsibility of only the lay associations to build and work for the community. Some important roles of association members are:

They help the whole parish to accept the new vision of community.

They help in establishing the new types of communities.

They do not insist on leading the communities, but help the leaders elected by those communities.

When the associations gather for their separate meetings, they decide on doing the tasks that neighbourhood communities are unable to fulfil.

They offer to train members of the neighbourhood communities for various tasks (SACBC 1989: 41).

### **Conclusion**

The central interest of chapter three lies in the two major concerns of the Pastoral Plan: Firstly, that in its aim to serve humanity, it moves beyond human barriers and forms strong community bonds, opening institutionalised services to everybody. The Pastoral Plan thus allowed for the viewpoint of the Second Vatican (GS) to be implemented as well. The chapter considers how the Pastoral Plan was brought into practice, the effect it had on communities of believers as well as how it was received. Under the first sub-topic: the call and ministry to serve, the crucial “part of our calling as Christians, an important part of our service to humanity” (SACBC 1989:29) is discussed. The Church has to demonstrate to its members how strong the forces of love, unity, peace and respect are. Salvation, at the centre of the Church, is a common concern for everyone who joins the Church, becoming a child of God, irrespective of our origin and of the faith we profess.

The Pastoral Plan was implemented, importantly, through the Small Christian Communities which are neighbourhood communities that are meant to permanently

provide services. In some parishes Small Christian Communities are called ward or section communities. Members meet every week in each other's homes, according to a system of rotation. The Small Christian Communities are based on gospel or scripture reading. They reflect on gospel values, sharing their insights, praying for different needs, and they fulfil communal tasks.

The Pastoral Plan depended for its implementation also on the Renew process which is a spiritual renewal process that assists in getting closer to Christ. It thus strengthens adult commitment to Jesus who is central to people's lives; and it releases new power of the Holy Spirit (SACBC 1989:38). In summary, the Renew process closes the gap between normal daily life and professed faith. It makes Christianity into a way of life. The process starts from top to bottom, in other words a diocesan team introduces the process in the parishes, and it follows "seasons".

The third and last way of implementing the Pastoral Plan is through Task Groups. These also contribute towards community building, but in a slightly different way from the Small Christian Communities and the Renew process. Task Groups attract people who like challenges and active participation. They concentrate on necessary community tasks and carry these out through lay ministries. Sometimes Task Groups are a continuation of existing parish groups that wish to improve parish life. They are not only spiritually focused but may also deal with general needs such as feeding the poor. They are "work-orientated" groups (SACBC 1989:39).

The research material from interviews was incorporated into the chapter. The following chapter deals with the theological perspective with central theme of transformation.

### **Introduction**

The focal point in chapter four is humanity and the endeavour to eliminate all forms of discrimination and all boundaries with the aim of transforming communities. Humanity transforms the world and vice versa. The Church plays a major role in this transformation by offering the best teaching concerning spiritual, emotional, physical and socio-political concepts. The Pastoral Plan itself is one of many plans of action the Church has developed for itself as the Pastoral Plan was for the people by people themselves. That is why Christian education will be discussed as an essential element for bringing about transformation in communities.

A balanced human being of integrity may with the passing of time begin to think differently about theology and about him- or herself and view the Church and world in a new light. The (Catholic) Church needs to be aware of such changes in its understanding of its mission. In connection with *Missio Dei* and evangelisation chapter four looks at three topics. The first one is theological perspective, here looking at humanity and world transformation, Church and mission, and transformation themes. The second topic is strategy for implementation: Christian education. The last topic is comparing communities of then and now.

### **Theological Perspective: Humanity and World Transformation**

In order for beneficial transformation to take place in the world, humankind and Christian religious education should both strive for change on both an individual and a communal level. This is the primary task of the Church's evangelisation and the main role of the Pastoral Plan is to urgently insist on a better quality of life for the poorest inhabitants of Southern Africa.

Christian education may preserve valuable doctrines and traditions (see for example CCC 10), it needs to move with the times. Teachings of long ago still play a vital role by introducing more modern ways of strengthening faith in communities. Tye states that "education has to do with continuity, with helping to carry forward across time the traditions and teachings that form the core and shape the life of a people" (2000:23). Education has to offer adventurous dynamics and interesting life messages for modern people without discarding historical useful doctrines. New fresh ideas are as essential as traditions that have supported people in earlier times. In other words, education has to

continuously maintain its relevance and contribute to transforming the world and humanity for the better. Tye terms this “continuity and change” (Tye 2000: 23-25) whereby people are expected to know where they come from while embracing the present time as well as future possibilities.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC 5) offers few reasons why the teaching of faith is important but whatever reasons it gives refer to the need for (social) transformation. The Church teaches for the sake of making disciples and of strengthening people’s belief that Jesus is the Son of God. Much of the instruction is geared towards building up the Church. This is done systematically to introduce people gradually to full Christian life (regarding faith and morals) as they experience inner growth, change, and increased understanding of God’s plan. Important sources for education are “Sacred Scriptures, the Fathers (or elders) of the Church, the Liturgy (or service programs), and the Church Magisterium (teachings)” (CCC 11). Catechism as basic teachings of Christian education is useful for all Christians whatever their particular denomination. For social (and world) transformation to take place one has to respect the right to freedom of choice in self transformation. Religious instruction is not a compulsory part of people’s education. They are free to choose for or against it.

Harkness puts it like this: “Christian faith communities (the Church) enable people to understand, appropriate and apply the Christian faith” (2002:33). But, above all, commitment from students should be “voluntary, self-determined, and without coercion” (:34). On this Tye, CCC, and Harkness are in collective agreement that religious education should lead to social (global) transformation. However, how just can religious education be if people have been brought up in the conviction that what they were taught is the unshakeable truth? Hence the question whether contemporary Christian education allows independent opinions and suggestions from learners who speak on the basis of experiences and challenges in their daily lives?

Although both, in their own distinct ways, may lead to social transformation, school-based education is different from church-based or Christian education. Christian education espouses an individual, effective and holistic take on education which, in turn, can be used by individual learners for social transformation. Christian education is about how an individual acts and affects his or her community in a way that touches other community members and that expands to bring social transformation. Hence Harkness pursues an idea of “ongoing transformation of all aspects of life and personality” (2002:34). The South African Catholic Bishops’ Conference fully supports

this perception and encourages the clergy to attend ongoing formation workshops in order to recharge their spiritual, emotional, social and physical powers and enable effective ministry. Religious leaders cannot positively and fruitfully provide education if they remain aloof from social realities. Basically, the Church has to inject life into lifeless and hopeless situations people find themselves in. Wherever people live in dehumanizing circumstances the Church should intervene and speak out on their behalf. It needs to protect people from loss of human dignity and social injustice. As the Church wants to serve and empower humankind it needs to fight all that threatens progress, for example unemployment, poor health care systems, and low quality education.

Connor mentions other examples of how people are dehumanized, “through the breakdown of marriage and family life, through sexual degradation, through crime and lack of person care, as well as through loneliness and the resulting abuse of drugs and alcohol” (1991:226-227). The Church plans various activities to help realise the mission of God and restore human beings to what God meant them to be: fully alive under his care and guidance. In order to restore human dignity - and possibly contributing to the transformation of the world – it may help to focus on the positive meaning of the term humanity.

Pope Francis, to restore and transform family dignity, recently published the exhortation on the love of marriage and family (*Amoris Laetitia*). The Pope would like to address issues that challenge marriage and family, drawing on biblical stories of births, love and family crises, to offer strength and encouragement to couples and families (AL 8). He shed some light on the teachings of the earliest Church regarding its understanding of marriage and on the mission of the family in world and Church today. Also the Second Vatican Council took a positive view of humanity and stated: “Christ fully reveals humanity to itself and makes clear its supreme calling” (GS 22). This statement highlights the perception that Christ, both human and divine, came to make humanity divine.

The theme for the Pastoral Plan, “Community Serving Humanity”, should not be considered as only sideways linked to the Church like for example, some human rights organisation, but as bringing the theological understanding of humanity and its relation to God closer. The theme, although it may sound spiritual to many, encourages even socio-political services to be rendered to communities in an effort to realise God’s will. If the Church wants to continue and transform the world, it will have to deal with various immediate evident issues and at the same time facilitate a deep transformation



from within (Connor 1991:228). Therefore evangelisation is needed for the spreading of the good news, beginning in the Church and moving out to the communities and the world. Immediate needs could be personal requirements such as skills development, educational and medical services, while deeper transformation would involve the sharing of insights into aspects of faith with others. Proper transformation occurs when communities adopt a give and take attitude and personal and communal talents are shared and respected. After all, the Pastoral Plan points out that “a new outlook on life should be developed, in which people are valued more than things, people respect their own dignity and that of others, confidence and trust replace fear” (PP 19). There is hope for, and the anticipation of, a bright future where love and respect exist.

As regards the relevance of the Pastoral Plan today, there is a threefold understanding of humanity in relation to transformation of the world: The world belongs to humanity (humankind participates in the world), the world belongs to God (God lives with his people in the world) and it is the world of our redemption (we are released from the power of sin) (Connor 1991:239-241).

### **Church and Mission, including *Missio Dei***

The Latin term *Missio Dei*, God’s Mission (Englesviken 2003:482) concerns according to Bosch (1991:390) the classical doctrine that God the Father sent His Son, Jesus Christ, into the world and the Father and the Son sent the Holy Spirit to further their mission. Now God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit have extended their mission further by including the Church in the world. It is the task of the Church to also expand the mission. Fundamental here is that the mission is God’s mission and it is beyond the understanding of humankind and Church. *Missio Dei* embraces all that God does in the world through people in and outside the church. Humankind, especially Christians, should see themselves as privileged when participating in the mission of God.

The church exists for the sake of the mission of God (for this reason it is according to Granberg-Michaelson (2014) “the missionary church”) and the mission, and therefore the church, continues. Through the mission it is revealed to us who God is in respect of the world and his people. In other words, we see God’s mission as dependent on God rather than on the church. God, the Trinitarian God, is the author of his mission and humankind (and the Church) has to fit into his plan. God’s mission is one of redeeming and invites every human being to participate. The Holy Spirit makes participants into witnesses and opens them up to salvation, lovingly given to them.

The Pastoral Plan (1989:11) gives the other side of the mission of God: God's plan is the source of the Pastoral Plan. The plan for the world - God's plan - is that we may be one just like the Father and Son are one (John 17:22) and that we may serve each other as Jesus served us (Matthew 20:28). The Pastoral Plan concurs with the *Missio Dei* understanding of God, namely that God is a community of Father, Son and Holy Spirit. If we were made in the image of God, we are a community of believers and it was God's plan that both communities (divine and human) should be united. We also are challenged to serve one another in our communities so that we fulfil God's plan or mission.

If there is an understanding that the Trinitarian God calls his people up and sends them out to participate in the mission, thus making the faithful participants (Bosch 1991: 390), then the mission has to be the ministry to people who are not yet Christians and evangelisation to those who are no longer Christians (:409). This encourages the breaking down of barriers and reaching out to people who desire food for their souls. Hence evangelisation calls people to mission (:418). This is what Kemper (2014) calls the work of triune God and it is the foundation of the Church's mission. The accent is not on individuals but on every member of mankind and those participating in the mission have to be broadminded as well.

The reasoning behind *Missio Dei* is based on the notion that the Church or the faithful (rich, poor, privileged or marginalized) are to be included and active in God's mission of evangelisation. Pope Francis stresses the need for reaching out to all of humankind, and mentions especially the lonely and the poor who should be given the joy of the gospel (evangelisation) so that they hear God's voice and feel his soothing hand upon them and the joy of his love closer to them, inspiring to do good (*EG* 2).

From the perspectives of practical theology and church history, the mission from the margins (Kemper 2014), that is from the oppressed or marginalized, is life giving and transforming. Those considered to be poor (also in spirit, Matthew 5) are not listened to, but they could teach the missionaries, preachers, and theologians what is important for God's mission. There should be a dialogue between missionaries and believers as the mission is "in the heart of the Triune God and in the mission the love which binds together the Holy Trinity overflows to all humanity and creation" (Kemper 2014:3-4).

On the parish level, the *Missio Dei* theory creates an opportunity for every member to play his or her part to achieve the vision, expressed in the Pastoral Plan. In doing so,

guidance by the Spirit can benefit people who actively take part (SACBC, 1989) since the Holy Spirit is the initiating, sustaining and re-creating presence in *Missio Dei* (Kemper 2014:3). The mission, as it was clarified to human beings through Jesus Christ, the Word that became flesh and dwelt among us (John 1:14), should take root in real life situations of those who hear the Word. In other words, the Word, and extensions of the church, has to be incorporated into a particular culture at a particular place and time.

Speaking about church and mission, the difficult and sensitive task of inculturation comes to mind. The church in its mission of proclaiming the good news has to treat with respect the cultural backgrounds of those to whom the proclamation is directed. While the church has the duty to preach and observe gospel values as given by Christ, it also has to acknowledge the apostolic traditions in the midst of the changing world. The Decree on the Church's Missionary Activity (*Ad Gentes*) says that the Church has been divinely sent to all nations to offer them "the universal sacrament of salvation" (AG 1). This makes the Church to be constantly on the mission and as the Church preaches, it should be the preaching of the word of truth that expands the Church (in fact, this was the primary duty of the apostles). The apostles' successors (the clergy, especially the bishops) carry forward the message of the word and ensure that God is glorified.

The Synod Fathers as successors of the apostles in Africa, put it like this: "Considering the rapid changes in the cultural, social, economic, and political domains, our local Churches must be involved in the process of inculturation in an ongoing manner, respecting the two following criteria: compatibility with the Christian message and communion with the universal Church" (EA 62). The Pastoral Plan (1989) gives no clear indication of how inculturation is dealt with, except as regards the political stance against discrimination, the common African belief that *umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu* (a person is a person through others), and the theme of "Community Serving Humanity".

"Inculturation is a movement towards full evangelisation. It seeks to dispose people to receive Jesus Christ in an integral manner. It touches them on the personal, cultural, economic, and political levels so that they can live a holy life in total union with God the Father, through the action of the Holy Spirit" (EA 62). Without doubt Church and mission are one with the Holy Trinity who is the initiator of and power behind all missions, irrespective of the Church's location. The mandate to preach the gospel to the world and the entire creation (Mark 16:15) given by Christ to his apostles before he returned to his Father, is what drives the Church in its mission. "The task of evangelising all people constitutes the essential mission of the Church. Evangelisation is

in fact the grace and vocation proper to the Church, her deepest identity. She exists in order to evangelise” (EA 55). Hence there is no evangelisation without the Church and vice versa.

The Catholic Church’s understanding of being missionary in all its elements and in its very existence includes bearing witness of life to faith, hope and love, as did the disciples of Christ (1 Peter 2: 15). The missionaries and their testimony to the life of Christ may even involve that their lives are cut short. However, such martyrdom may turn to be our glory and strength in the present age. How could this be? Our relationship with God, one another and creation would be renewed. There would be transformation of our lives and better understanding of the Church’s teachings. In order for this transformation to take place, we should be opened up to the work of the Holy Spirit within us and be witnesses in word and deed.

The challenge of the Pastoral Plan wherever it is applied, is that it has to touch individuals and communities in their very existence. For example, evangelisation may be expressed in different activities such as Proclamation of the Word, inculturation, dialogue, justice and peace, and social communication (EA 57). What these have in common is that the Holy Spirit has to be continually provoked for the sake of the success of evangelisation processes, whether in Africa or elsewhere. Most Church documents stress this and even the Pastoral Plan was launched on the Pentecost feast day. It is simple: the Holy Spirit gives strength for the mission to continue, guides to the truth and encourages missionaries to bear witness to Christ. The Holy Spirit takes away the element of fear and replaces it with courage.

Christ is the light of humanity (LG 1) and continues to enlighten the world for the universal mission of the Church. The Church, in its mission, is an instrument of uniting God and God’s people. In a very special way Christ and the Holy Spirit play an essential role for enlightenment in the Church. Hence the Church is called the (new) people of God in Christ (LG 9, Onwubiko 2001:41). This means that the Church is founded by Christ. “The people of God in Christ are not characterized by a specific nationality, a particular economic, political, cultural, social or class distinction. They are the messianic people now bearing the Christian hope, which is open to universal access, to a universal spiritual validity, open to personal and individual participation” (:42). There is no way of describing the Church in its mission without putting Christ at its centre.

The *Ad Gentes* summarizes important aspects of the missionary Church in three points. Firstly, Christians have an obligation to fulfil the duties of Christ because they have been baptized while the power of the Holy Spirit is at work in them since they were confirmed. Hence, they have to lead their exemplary lives, wherever they find themselves (AG 10-11). They also have to stress the importance of transformation and conversion.

Secondly, the *Ad Gentes* points to gospel preaching and assembling God's people as a central aspect of the missionary Church. Once again the message of salvation is spread among all people and it is up to individuals to respond. Those who respond positively form a community of believers and follow Christ who is the "way, the truth and the life" (John 14:6). However, the Church strongly forbids that anyone should in any way be coerced or forced to receive faith (AG 13).

The third point concerns the forming of the Christian community (AG 15). This is in line with the work of the Holy Spirit who calls and welcomes all people to Christ (through the Word and preaching), and offer a new life in baptism to those who believe the good news of Christ. They are gathered as God's people, called "a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a purchased people" (1 Peter 2:9). Missionaries are to form communities of the faithful people of God who will continue to proclaim the good news in the Church and in the world. These communities will serve humanity.

### **Transformation Themes**

The Church exists to evangelise whereto it uses the power of the Holy Spirit. Therefore Christians - the Church members and followers of Jesus - live and move in the power of the Spirit of Christ and the Spirit is their transforming energy (Rakoczy 1991:262). It is good to be aware of the fruits of the Spirit to counteract all that which pulls down the Church in its task of evangelisation (the mission of God). St Paul's letter to the Galatians (5:22-23) lists these fruits: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. These fruits are required for a better society and for a community serving humanity. The implementation of these fruits would bring transformation of the world closer to its realisation. Comblin in Rakoczy's reflection paper offers other "fruits of the Spirit" namely Freedom, Speech, Action, Community, and Life (1991:262). Rakoczy uses these fruits in a manner applicable to the South African context. They could be called transformation themes. As for freedom, South

Africa was overwhelmed by the apartheid regime and its ill-treatment of black people in all spheres of life, political, economic, social and religious.

However, “freedom is both a gift liberating us from oppression and a gift for the creation of a new community” (Rakoczy 1991:263). If we are positive and appreciate our freedom in the democratic South Africa, we can focus on establishing better new communities that will serve humanity across all races. Kearney and Zulu, during their interviews, gave testimonies on such communities, but there is still room for improvement. When we are free as human beings, human dignity that was lost is rediscovered as “freedom is a gift of the Spirit which transforms oppression into liberation by freeing us from what enslaves us in all dimensions of life” (:264).

The fruit named as speech is a treasured gift from God expressing human freedom (Rakoczy 1991:265). The Bible is a good example of this fruit with Jesus being the word made flesh (John 1:14) to dwell among human beings. Speech means firstly the proclamation of the good news, of freedom and salvation. The word of God is fully functioning and alive to transform the people of God. However, without the work of the Holy Spirit Jesus and his proclamation mission would not be fulfilled. The proclamation gives consolation to the poor and oppressed. In other words, it is the response to their state of poverty and their hope for restoration. Speech as in Jesus’ time is still heard today, bemoaning the inequality between rich and poor, unemployment and homelessness.

As concerns the fruit of action, Jesus was a good example. He came on the world, was alive and active, fully human and divine. Wherever he went, people’s beliefs and their manner of doing things changed. They were transformed and began to act like him, thus proclaiming the gospel. From the early Church onwards, the mission and zeal for the gospel had been the primary inspiration of evangelisers. This meant serving with love and compassion all who were in need. It was the Holy Spirit that prompted the different evangelisers to act out their faith. New adventures, new ideas about a prosperous future and increased religious understanding are bound to come about when the Holy Spirit is involved: “The Spirit is energy for transformative action” (Rakoczy 1991: 268). This simplifies the notion of liberating action, that is, there is preaching, repentance and transformation. There is a proclamation of a “servant church composed of small serving communities...a very powerful witness within this country of the strength of the Spirit leading people to forget themselves in order to attend to the needs of others”( :270). The Holy Spirit to date also made healing a part of historical memory.

Another fruit is community which should consist of speech and actions or word and deed, because complaining and seeking pity does not help. A good, simple example is Acts 4: 32-35. The early Church practised sharing and knew no needy. The Holy Spirit empowered people and made them bond so that members of the community worked hard for the benefit of all. The same Holy Spirit might make us transcend our racial and other barriers today. We have to remember that *umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu* (a person is a person through others). This means that the environment in which we are brought up influences or shapes our thinking and our acting. The society we come from may determine our identity and destination. Therefore, the stronger Small Christian Communities become, the more hope there is for our communities and Church. There is a need for a community that is not too afraid to speak out or too lazy to serve humanity and to “go beyond the barriers of race, class, sex, and age” (Rakoczy 1991:274).

The last fruit is life. Here too the Holy Spirit has a crucial role creating life in lifeless situations. The life this created however begins on earth but will know no end, everlasting. This is life as Jesus brought it through “his preaching, healing, teaching and his compassionate love” (Rakoczy 1991: 275). As follower of Jesus, one experiences the power of life in the risen Lord, and one feels encouraged through the Holy Spirit to share life with others. Life thus becomes a life of hope extended beyond one’s time on earth. In this context of hopefulness it is essential to resuscitate, or to create, structures like Small Christian Communities and the Renew process to further ensure life eternal. Paying lip service however is not sufficient. Action speaks louder than words, for example participating in feeding schemes; collecting clothes for those who can’t afford buying them, visiting the sick and the imprisoned; sheltering the homeless; educating the ignorant and assisting in the provision of good health care systems. In that way we are striving to become a community serving humanity, allowing the Holy Spirit to inspire us.

Granberg-Michaelson (2014:18-19) stipulates the importance of Holy Spirit- filled local faith (Small Christian) communities which carry out the mission of the Church, God’s mission. He makes the point that we need to reflect on what it means to be a missionary Church. His definition is that: “A Missionary Church is one which places its participation in God’s mission in the world at the heart of its life and identity. Doing so means mission is not a program, but a defining dimension of the church’s nature” (:18).

Another point made by Granberg-Michaelson is that the theological shift challenges us to consider what the church means by Renewal of the Spirit and Fullness of Life. These

concepts refer to the transformational powers of God's mission in the entire world. "The gospel of Jesus Christ transforms one's individual life through the Spirit, incorporating him or her into a community that is shaped by the empowering work of this same Spirit. And this community expresses its life through joining in God's mission, offering the gift of Life to all" (:18-19). It is however important to keep in mind that the Church is part of God's mission.

### **Strategy for Implementation: Christian Education**

The transformation of the Church occurs by embracing more humanistic elements. All parishes and any other (Christian or non-Christian) communities should have human life as their core. This has to become apparent in worship, prayer, teaching, reading scriptures, and in doing ministry. In other words, it is always human beings who are important rather than objects, possessions and all that which is not human. Sexuality, family life, justice, human rights, and fundamental material needs (Connor 1991:225 and PP 19), if genuinely observed, make the world and the Church more human. This is due to the discipline, teaching, and sharing of good ethical values.

Christian or religious education is the fundamental tool for social (or community) transformation effected by Christian or religious communities. This part of the research will discuss the above statement. The term "Christian education" will be used in explaining how the Church may transform humanity or society. In this context Christian education is seen as bringing social transformation.

Religious education is a general term and may refer to any kind of religious instruction. However, Christian education implies an education that is concerned with the doctrines of Christ. Examples used below are based on specific Christian (Roman-Catholic) viewpoints as the research deals with what is known as "Christian Religious Education" (Groome 1998:11).

What is Christian education? Tye, Freire and Groome's definitions are presented below, followed by a consideration of Christian education as a fundamental tool for social transformation in the community. Christian education begins with the individual, widening to include the family and proceeding to involve a community. It is about the growth of individual Christian faith that is both demonstrated and encouraged by participation in a community. One of many challenges met by Christian education is that of possible, and undesirable, indoctrination.



Christian education has been described in many ways, for example as nurture, as inspiring critical thinking, as stimulating spiritual growth, as habit forming, and as moral development, Tye has developed four ways of defining and realising Christian education (2000:10-12). Firstly, he sees Christian education as *religious instruction*. This entails that the Church defines Christian education as instrumental in conveying knowledge and traditions pertaining to the Christian faith. It is a formal and structured educational process. The Roman-Catholic Church has embraced this understanding of Christian education. Instruction is required before any further steps can be taken by a candidate for conversion (RCIA).

Tye also describes Christian education as a *socialization process*. This definition refers to the manner in which people participate in groups, taking their identity, beliefs, habits and certain behaviours from those groups. In other words, Christian education channels people into certain ways of interacting with groups in the Church. They may for example participate in choir or music ministry; in communion service, ministry of hospitality. Groome calls Christian education defined in this manner “transcendent activity” (1998:11) where people are taught to relate to or engage with each other in a way that shows their relationship with the Transcendent (God). The Pastoral Plan (1989:33) puts it thus: “Our service to the world needs to find expression in our liturgies. Our liturgies should be planned and prepared with due concern for our task in society”. Interactions within the Church are good and welcomed but should go further and extend out into the communities.

Another definition of Christian education is *the personal development approach*. This definition is based on “developmental theory, which suggests that there is a structure of growth involving various steps or stages through which every individual moves and that education is a process that assists this growth” (Tye 2000:11). This definition is successful if people develop at different levels during their lives. It has to do with nurturing and allowing an individual’s spirituality to mature. However, in as much as education is understood as an individual rather than a communal activity, its destination is to change and improve society. This is what Groome calls “ontological activity” (1998:11) because it profoundly engages that which is human; it is a humanizing activity. Tye’s last definition states that Christian education is *a process of liberation*. This is the case when Christian education is concerned with social transformation, involving renewal of the Church, people and society. Education then “becomes a prophetic activity” (:12) with special attention paid to people’s skills and participation

in social activities. This kind of education encourages group work, community service and projects. The liberation process starts with conscientization (Freire 1996). Groome refers to Christian education of this type as “political activity” (:12) whereby people show “God’s reign, love and justice, peace and freedom, wholeness and fullness of life” (:13) in their existence as free human beings.

Christian education according to these four definitions is available in the Church and well represented in the Pastoral Plan (1989). The educational processes may not be apparent simultaneously but can be experienced independent of each other. Hence there is no right or wrong and no first or last definition of Christian education. The education offered depends on the Church’s experiences and its movements with the signs of the times which means that the Church has its own definitions.

Tye, in introducing *Basics of Christian Education*, agrees that Christian education is important for personal growth and for active participation in the community of faith (2000:2-3), what the Church calls “full, conscious and active participation” (SC 14). Christian education stimulates maturity and a sense of responsibility if properly conveyed. As the recipients of Christian education progress and develop as Church members they will begin to participate in community building. Church members need to be involved in Church affairs and ministries and bring about transformation, even in the places where they live. Christian education is the key to doing this successfully. Faith without works is dead (James 2:17).

Christian education also deepens faith in cases where the mind requires sharpening, new inputs and spiritual revival. For example, the local parish community (Church) may spend one month a year on assisting its congregants with learning about faith, sharing and deepening it (as mentioned in the Durban archdiocesan catechetical year planner). The deepening of faith leads to the discovery of various aspects that are discussed in consultations with other church members. This is contrary to Freire’s “banking concept of education” (1996:53). Freire’s concept, which he critiques, does not allow students active participation in their education. Deepening of faith encourages and involves students coming up with suggestions for their education. The Catholic Church has a program that is well suited to this form of education, called “the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults”. Adults (and youths) are themselves involved in the teaching process, running learning programs and being part of decisions taken.

There is a tendency to interpret “basic” as meaning the foundation upon which morality, behaviour, etc. are built. This may imply that past answers to questions are still relevant today and can be used to deal with contemporary challenges and frustrations. According to Tye, “basics” in education refers to that which is central and necessary (2000:4). The basics should not be taken for granted but clearly pointed out and acknowledged. In view of this, Freire’s banking concept of education (1996:52-58) cannot be absolutely discarded. Why are basics vital for Christian education? Why do people educate? Tye states that six fundamental areas have to be taken into account when preparing Christian education programmes: the concept of definition of Christian education, its purpose, the context namely the setting and the environment, the content or what is taught, the participants, the process followed and the method used (2000:5-6).

The Church when considering how it has facilitated evangelisation in Southern Africa using the Pastoral Plan (1989), should include the above points in its evaluation, especially in respect of plans for future teaching.

Groome, in Tye’s *Basics of Christian Education*, substantiates Tye’s argument on Christian education and emphasizes the purpose of inspiring people to live as Christians in line with God’s plan for His creation (Tye 2000:22). Thus *Missio Dei* (God’s mission) should dominate Christian education. Education is a tool that instructs and guides human behaviour and that simultaneously conveys directives from God to humanity, regarding creation at large. This approach allows for taking account of issues of socio-political, economic, emotional, and physical injustice in communities. Groome’s (1998:14-26) purposes for Christian religious education are: for the reign of God, for a lived Christian faith, and for the wholeness of human freedom.

For Christian education to be a fundamental, useful tool it has to stimulate personal growth and allow for full active participation in faith communities. It has to deepen faith and pass on God’s intentions for His creation. Since Christian education concerns both humanity and non-human creation, there has to be interaction between the two. Christian education has to serve the wellbeing of both, taking also the needs of non-human nature into account. One of the challenges facing Christian education is that it can be perceived as indoctrination by the Church and indoctrination is normally a negative factor and may be seen as unjust manipulation (Harkness 2002:35). In the past indoctrination has to a certain extent been seen as acceptable, even positive, especially as regards doctrines and traditions. Indoctrination also served to protect the elderly in the Church against the challenges of young people who wanted articles of faith to be

explained. The answer could be simple: believe what the Church teaches and know that it is a mystery that only the clergy understand. However, some ancient doctrines and traditions have, along with the Church, survived over the centuries. Hence, indoctrination (although still negative but not forced) is perhaps not wrong in an absolute sense.

The typology of indoctrination is, briefly and negatively, discussed by a few authors in Harkness (2002:35-36). Snook for example describes indoctrination as teaching that is based on belief and that has no regard for evidence of its incorrectness. Hill mildly concurs and indicates that such teaching restricts intellectual participation of the learner by not considering his or her critical awareness. Indoctrination kind of teaching despises the learner's views and selects what contributions of learners to accept. Melchert strongly agrees that indoctrination is purely the imposition of authoritative belief systems on others by a methodology that precludes interaction and questioning whereas the beliefs themselves may provide space for discussions. When it comes to Christian education, faith has to be discussed freely. The proper way forward is that suggestions should emerge on the basis of critical propositions. In other words, let us allow healthy, dignified debates to nourish faith and spiritual life. Teachers should facilitate participation of students so that they can contribute to the development of their learning.

Harkness (2002:39-44) offers the following suggestions for the teaching of different age groups, minimising the risk of indoctrination tendencies.

1. *Create an open community*, a community which has freedom to express its own views and suggestions, where all members are vital for the building of community and adopt a give and take approach to others. Such a community will accept challenges and dialogues in the search for proper responses to social experiences and challenges.
2. *Encourage comprehensive commitment*, before participants commit themselves to any decision taken (internalise and own discussions). They are to be well informed before deciding on a viewpoint. Joshua 24:14-15 is a good example, referring to the kind of choice and commitment that was expected from the Israelites.
3. *Appreciate the realities of power and influence*. As teachers have power and influence, they should be careful not to use these to get through and override students. Students need to be free to choose and should not feel coerced to arrive at any decision prematurely.

4. *Recognise the limitations of participants.* People have different spiritual, mental and emotional capabilities and their teachers should note differences and approach each participant accordingly. There should be no pressure to share personal experiences, whether in a group or in private with teachers.

Tye (2000:1-2), looking at necessary conditions for sound Christian education, raises the following concerns. He firstly mentions the fact that there is *a disinterest among adults in adult educational programmes*. In this context two possible observations made in the researcher's community Church may be of interest. One observation is that adults are not part of drawing up the educational programmes. They feel more or less forced to take part and have no other opinion. In addition their teacher is most likely young and unqualified. Another concern of Tye's is *the failure of congregations to maintain involvement of their youth after eighth grade*. Youths at that stage require special attention: they are getting more aware of society around them and also changes in their bodies challenge the way in which they look upon themselves and their faith. Some programs help youths to stay focused such as "The Edge" (from grade eight to matriculation) and "Life Teen" (for those who have finished matriculation and young adults). Through these programs youth find appropriate answers for challenges including relationships, drugs and substance abuse). The programmes draw young people into discussions and help them to find possible solutions to problems.

Tye is also worried about *the increasing difficulty in finding and keeping volunteer teachers*. In the secular world people generally find it difficult to give of their time unless they are getting paid. A solution might be to offer some incentive to those willing to help, whether by reimbursing them for travel expenses (in the case of workshops or training) or by paying them as teachers. Another problem is *the apparent lack of interest of clergy in education*. While education can indeed be left to specialized parishioners, the clergy should provide support and ensure the smooth running of religious education in their communities. Teaching does not start and end with homilies or sermons. Well organized classes for Christian education are crucial for evangelisation. If the clergy does not have sufficient time to visit classes, he or she should liaise with the coordinator for Christian education in the community to show interest and to be updated.

*Drawing parents into the educational process* of their children poses another problem. It is not only a teacher's duty to teach children. Parents should help. If teachers inform parents about teaching programmes, parents would know what is going on in class and

be involved – maybe even sit with their children in the classroom - instead of simply dropping children off. A final concern of Tye's is *the apparent failure of current programmes and educational methods to address adequately and appropriately the changing needs and interests of adults, adolescents, and children*. The Church needs to read the signs of the times and make education more relevant to the contemporary world, *inter alia* by discussing transformative ideas.

### **Comparing communities of then and now**

Since the beginning of the Church much has changed, in the Church and generally in the world. Changes lead to transformations since the Church is missionary in essence. While the Trinitarian God is the source of mission, the Son and the Holy Spirit have to make the mission of the Church succeed. It is helpful to compare communities in the past and present, to get a clear idea of ways in which the Church has formed and transformed evangelisation in Southern Africa. The Church is on the move (dynamic) and communities play an important role in this regard.

The way of life in the eighties differed, according to Mrs Jabu Zulu, strongly from that of today. Politically and economically things were not easy. Since then there have been many changes in the Church and in society, and there is no more segregation. Zulu mentioned that there is freedom to the house of worship, one can go into any church and participate. The neighbourhood is welcoming and friendly to persons of all races, and people from very different background form Small Christian Communities. There is growth of faith and the Pastoral Plan has opened the doors even to people who are not South Africans. The way local people receive and accept other fellow Christians shows the influence of the Pastoral Plan (Zulu was not clear whether also non-Christians are welcome in these communities). That relevant prayers are said in vernacular languages also leads to increased understanding and participation.

The researcher's observation and opinion have come to the understanding that there is indeed growth of faith and that Southern Africans have gained from accepting the challenge to be a community serving humanity. An example is the Emmanuel Cathedral in Durban which serves people from various countries. Positive is also that those who were served in the beginning and whose position has since improved, today join in and serve others. There is a stronger sense of community in the service of humanity. Bridges to reach out more people of different faiths have been built.

Fritz Lobinger has a different perspective. Previously the South African Catholic Bishops' Conference used to give directions; the clergy led the church communities and people followed. This is why Archbishop Hurley in 1975 could initiate Evangelisation Today in South Africa as a research project on evangelisation.

Present-day communities consist of the laity that has a voice and is not afraid to give opinions on the issues it is faced with. There is more empowerment of the laity. The communities or parishes are led by Parish Pastoral Councils and Parish Finance Committees or Councils. The laity has taken a lot of responsibility in terms of serving humanity according to Lobinger.

As regards the present research, Lobinger was reluctant to answer a question concerning the needs of people today. It could be this is because he has been since many years retired and is out of touch with the present circumstances in the communities. However there is a structure (committee) in the SACBC that deals with community needs. This structure also represents Southern Africa communities as the voice for laity in the conference. Although the clergy is part of this structure, but lay people lead and have strong voice on it. Lobinger knew in the meantime quite well what he was talking about and it was clear that he is still passionate about evangelisation.

Paul Nadal was of the opinion that, with the changes that have happened in our country, it would be easier to implement the Pastoral Plan. Some of the rural parishes used to struggle to finish the faith-sharing material provided to them within six weeks and took instead six months as they lived in remote areas and had difficulty meeting on a regular bases while, in addition, most people in rural areas were at the time illiterate and had to rely on a few, usually young, individuals to read and facilitate prayer sessions. Nadal suggested that currently an archdiocesan team should be established to renew the Renew Process.

In Nadal's view also Catechesis (the Church's teachings on faith) deserves more attention in order to effect "information, formation and transformation of the community" (Nadal 1991: 102-117). The Pastoral Plan also contributes to increased information and transformation of communities. Paddy Kearney comes straight to the point: There are visible changes. For example, there is no pure race in the parish, people are mixed and at times the parish experiences tensions as a result of clashing cultures. The critical challenge today is how the parish welcomes and embraces African foreigners. In the words of Nadal (2016), people need to be informed (who is the

Church and what is the Church's responsibility to unite), formed (pastoral plan of action towards living Christianity), and transformed (bring about changes or services for better life for all).

In answer to the first two research questions Kearney provided notes taken from his book, "Guardian of the Light". He provided various materials on the Pastoral Plan of which he has a vivid knowledge, not only its formation but also its implementation and its relevance at present. In relation to community comparisons and changes in the last decades, people need to be reminded of the Pastoral Plan and its backbone, namely Community Serving Humanity, so that they may behave with more sensitivity towards other nationalities.

Barry Wood (2016), like Kearney, sees many changes in communities. "When the Pastoral Plan was instituted we were at the height of the apartheid era. Slowly but surely, through serving the society in which we live, we were able to bring down the barriers of apartheid. Our church and society structures assisted, but still we have a lot to do in the Church. For example, the 'we and they' kind of attitude (a legacy of apartheid) must be replaced by 'us'. We have to try and reach out more to others, break down racial boundaries in order to change behaviours. In that way we will become truly a community serving humanity".

Edwina Ward first focuses on questions of leadership or clergy: The archdiocese was under a dynamic and vibrant leadership. The priests were available to the people. There were trainings, in both IsiZulu and English. No one was left behind and the Church as a whole was moving forward. "The IsiZulu speaking community should not be left behind because they are a large component of the community", Ward stated. The archdiocese was unified in its purpose, namely evangelisation. There was complete commitment from all sides to the "Community Serving Humanity" vision. There were even offices, in the chancery, to organize Renew and its evangelical mission. Translations (into IsiZulu) of material to be distributed to different parishes were professionally done. The chancery put everyone on the same page concerning what was happening.

However, what about the community today? Parishes are no longer unified in the goals they pursue. Parishes like the Emmanuel Cathedral should, in their diversity, find unity. Leaders have to share the vision of evangelisation and work together. One sign of the wish for greater unity would be to surround houses with hedges instead of walls so that parishioners could be able to see each other when they walk in the streets.



Ward's conclusion was that today's parishes in the archdiocese of Durban are not united by 'one' vision. "Each parish works in their own direction".

The researcher's observations were that Edwina Ward has a lot of knowledge about the Pastoral Plan and its implementation, especially Small Christian Communities and Renew. She also made good suggestions as to how to move forward with evangelisation as the Church in Southern Africa. For example, the clergy should be dynamic, vibrant and available to the people.

### **Conclusion**

This chapter deals with theological perspectives: humanity and world transformation, dividing the material into following subtopics: church and mission, including *Missio Dei*; transforming themes. The other two following topics are strategy for implementation: Christian education and comparisons of communities of then and now. As concerns humanity transformation by the Church, Christian or religious education was proposed as fundamental for bringing about humanity or social transformation. Christian education refers to an education that is inclined to adhere the doctrines of Christ. Suggestions as to what constitutes Christian education are provided by Tye, Freire and Groome.

For global transformation to take place, humankind and Christian religious education should both strive for change on both an individual and a communal level. The church (people) exists to evangelize and this is the Church's identity (EA55). People, especially Christians, need to be involved and show active participation in the mission of the Church bearing in mind the transformation that has to take place. We learn from God and church, and for God as the church, proclaim the mission. That is why it is crucial to have strategy how people ought to participate and advance the message of the mission. This may be done through organised group discussions or seminars where people are part of programme formed for them.

There has to be another understanding that the Church moves with signs of times. Comparisons of communities' education and catechetical activities once engaged before may differ in present times. Therefore Church leadership should stay dynamic and vibrant with a complete commitment from clergy and laity to the 'Community Serving Humanity' vision. All parishes in one diocese at least should have one vision or direction. That direction is to lead to God by the way people serve humanity. The

following last chapter is conclusion and summary of the whole research with suggestions for further research.

## Chapter Five – Conclusion

Chapter five consists of three major components that together represent the core of the present study. They are a summary, the research finding, and suggestions for the way forward.

This research has critically examined the Pastoral Plan of the Catholic Church in Southern Africa (SACBC 1989) and its implementation. The Southern African Catholic Bishops' Conference adopted this evangelisation theme from the 1974 Synod of Bishops meeting in Rome and set out to develop it locally for Southern African church. The resulting Pastoral Plan, as the SACBC's vision for evangelisation in the region was a response to the pressing need for transformation in the country. The bishops crossed Catholic borderlines with choosing "Community Serving Humanity" as their theme. They wished to take up the challenge of the Second Vatican Council that the Church had to be of service "towards the kingdom of the Father ... message of salvation intended for all people" (GS 1).

The ideal was to unite all communities, religious and non-religious. The imperative was to form a single community that would serve all of humanity. The research findings are proven by Kearney (2009:265): "The internal [goal was] increasing community spirit in the Church, and the external [goal was] building a better society, which meant improving the quality of life, working for human dignity and social justice and promoting human development". In an interview with the researcher Kearney (2016) mentioned that some Anglican dioceses took an interest in the Renew process. Hence there was a sense of moving beyond Catholic boundaries. There is also the Hurley legacy (which continues to be the way forward in service of humankind), the Denis Hurley Centre which has made a huge difference in many people's lives. It runs various projects, participated in and contributed to by different religious denominations including Muslim, Hindu, and Protestant communities in and around Durban) who explicitly praise the Pastoral Plan, its implementation and its relevance.

The second chapter of this research report discusses the Catholic Church in Southern Africa, focusing on its notion of community: the historical background of the concept in the Church, how to define it and how is it linked to the Pastoral Plan (1989). The notion of human community was based on the divine community of Father, Son and Holy Spirit (SACBC 1989:17) and through Jesus Christ; the new human community

was created. Its distinctive traits are “Love of God and love of one another” (SACBC 1989:17).

The findings on this second chapter are that evangelisation has long been a central concern of the Church. Missionary work in Southern Africa started in 1805 and later the *Lumen Gentium* document had motivated and encouraged lay participation. Parishes too were encouraged to have pastoral councils. Some dioceses since have also had diocesan synods which interact with the laity, exchanging ideas for their dioceses. Concerning community up building there are three research findings: Community is formed by liturgy, catechises, and gospel. The way forward is to keep opened communication horizons and unite the Southern African church, including humanity in general. This is the reason for formulation of the Pastoral Plan - the Church based on Christ’s plan (SACBC 1989:5) and serves all people (SACBC 1989:7), irrespective of their background and origins (Nadal, Kearney, Wood and Ward agreed with this point).

Connecting the third chapter, it deals with implementation of the Pastoral Plan (1989) and the major themes of factors in implementation and its reception in Southern Africa. The Pastoral Plan was implemented by small Christian communities, renew process and task groups. The research states that it was the Catholic Church opening its doors to non-Catholics and accepting conversion of those who wish to convert (Wood in his interview, 2016, concurred with this). Pastoral Plan implementation has been effective means of evangelisation and led to a revival of the Church. Themes and methods have given testimony to the decision of the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) that the mission had to be centred on evangelisation of humankind based on, situational rather than territorial considerations. The central theme of the chapter is service for all (GS 42).

Moving forward, the Church has to show love, unity, peace and respect as vital rallying points for members and non members. Serving is love and goes with two pillars of the Pastoral Plan: community and humanity.

Chapter four discusses theological perspectives: humanity and world transformation, dividing the material into two subtopics: church and mission, including *Missio Dei*; transforming themes. The last two topics are strategy for implementation: Christian education and comparisons of communities of then and now. The focal point is of this chapter is humanity and transformation and Christian education plays a major role. Christian education is a fundamental tool for social (or community) transformation by

Christian (or religious) communities. Tye, Freire and Groome provide definitions of Christian education. The Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC 5) offers few reasons why the teaching of faith is important but whatever reasons it gives refer to the need for (social) transformation (and this includes *Missio Dei*, God's mission). Hence we see and find God's mission as dependent on God rather than on the church and people. The Church or people (rich, poor, privileged or marginalized) are to be included and allowed to participate in God's mission of evangelisation.

Chapter four also considers differences between communities past and present to determine the effectiveness of the Pastoral Plan. Zulu when being interviewed said that, with segregation gone, churches and neighbourhoods welcome people of different races and religions and everybody can join Small Christian Communities. Kearney mentions that at times there are culture clashes in the parishes while Wood highlights the need to reach out and break down racial barriers. Lobinger remembers that in the past it was always the clergy that led the communities whereas today the laity is part of the leadership of Church ministries.

Ward comments that in the past the Church leadership was vibrant and priests were available for the people. There was training in IsiZulu and English. These positive points should be revived by the present clergy. Nadal expects that it will be easier to implement the Pastoral Plan in the new South Africa where most rural people are educated and mobile. Beginning with the Second Vatican Council the Church has opened its doors for a more adventurous, dynamic apostolic zeal by listening to and encouraging active participation of the laity. The Pastoral Plan is one result of the fresh wind blowing through the Church.

The Church has changed and people today enjoy being part of the change. SACBC has the faithful empowered, *inter alia* by translating the Pastoral Plan into various local languages. However, the time has come to look again at the plan, update its style and terminology and make it relevant to current challenges in the Church, for example HIV/AIDS, the influx of foreign nationals, the rates of unemployment and poverty, and the mismanagement of the country's resources (corruption). The Pastoral Plan should also clarify the Church's views on ecumenism and inculturation, without undermining or weakening its hierarchical structures.

In this context Christian or religious education could be introduced at Catholic (and government) schools and in Diocesan Pastoral Centres. Seminars could be held where

relevant topics are discussed in age groups and in local languages for a better understanding of, for example, the teachings of the Church. Such discussions should take place after introductory lessons have been given to participants. Laity and clergy should get together and prepare for such discussions. Introductory sessions and seminars should be open for all denominations and taking part in the discussions should be encouraged. In addition, frank comments on the Pastoral Plan, its failings and its successes, could well result in a healthy revival of this worthy plan.

This research has critically examined the Pastoral Plan of the Southern African Catholic Church and its evangelical role in the context of Community Serving Humanity, including its implementation and reception, which highlights the church's role in facilitating evangelisation in Southern Africa.

By focusing on Southern Africa, the analytical relevance of this research has been premised on its capacity to provide understanding of the (evangelical) participatory role of the Catholic Church. The Southern African Catholic Church has based its evangelisation on the Pastoral Plan and its theme of "Community Serving Humanity". The Church and its Pastoral Plan strive for societal transformation by reinforcing God's universal plan for humanity.

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#### Appendix One: Interviewees

Mr Paddy Kearney, 08 July 2016, Durban.

Bishop F. Lobinger, 06 July 2016, Mariannhill.

Monsignor Paul Nadal, 07 July 2016, Durban (Umbilo)

Dr Edwina Ward, 17 July 2016, Durban (Musgrave)

Bishop Barry Wood, 12 July 2016, Durban (Morningside)

Mrs Jabu Zulu, 12 July 2016, Durban.



UNIVERSITY OF  
KWAZULU-NATAL

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INYUVESI  
YAKWAZULU-NATALI

18 February 2016

Dear ...

My name is Nkosinathi Ngcobo, a Masters student in the School of Religion, Philosophy and Classics at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. My area of interest is Ministerial/Pastoral Studies (Pastoral Care, to be specific) and my research topic is: **The Evangelisation of the Catholic Church in Southern Africa: Community Serving Humanity** is on the Pastoral Plan (1989). I am focusing on the Southern African Catholic Church, how the Catholic Church has facilitated evangelization in the archdiocese of Durban and surroundings. The research will include interviews. During interviews there will be recordings, with permission, and participant(s) are free to withdraw anytime they feel not comfortable. There is no remuneration given for the interviews to be held; it is a voluntary participation.

It will be my honour if you would like to participate in this research.

Kind regards,

Nkosinathi Ngcobo

---

Signature

---

Date

(participant)

---

Signature

---

Date



**UNIVERSITY OF  
KWAZULU-NATAL**

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**INYUVESI  
YAKWAZULU-NATALI**

30 June 2016

Dear ...

**RE: Consent Form**

I, ..... agree to participate in this Masters Research. I agree to be interviewed by the student, Nkosinathi Ngcobo (student number: 213570255).

I consent to the recorded interview [ ☐ ]

I do not consent the recorded interview [ ☐ ]

I am aware that there is no remuneration involved [ ☐ ]

I am aware that I can withdraw from the research anytime [ ☐ ]

_____	_____	_____
Name	Signature	Date

## Appendix Four: Interview questions



### **Interview questions:**

1. How was the Pastoral Plan (1989) started?
2. How the Pastoral Plan was made alive (engagement)?
3. Is the Pastoral Plan still relevant today? If yes, then how?
4. What are community comparisons one can make for then and now?

DIOCESAN CONSULTATION : 7 AND 8 NOVEMBER 1987

Circular Number 2 25 September, 1987

To Parish Priests and Parish Pastoral Councils

At the Diocesan Consultation on 7 and 8 November 1987 there will be small group discussions. In order to prepare for these we would ask you to keep the following points in mind :

1. Delegates to the Consultation are coming as representatives of their parishes. It is therefore important that they speak on behalf of the parish and not give their own individual opinions.
2. Parishes will have discussed different sections of the Pastoral Plan Workbook. The questions below cover the main topics which it is hoped your parish will have covered in your discussions.
3. In order to ensure that all may be heard at the Consultation, we ask parishes to reduce suggestions and comments to three only, as indicated in the questions.
4. So that delegates will be prepared for the discussions we ask them to bring written responses to these questions.

QUESTIONS

1. Having discussed the theme Community Serving Humanity, how does your parish feel about it?
2. List THREE main activities now happening in your parish under each of the following headings :
  - community
  - serving humanityIt is accepted that one or other activity may fall under both headings.
3. What THREE main obstacles do you experience in your efforts to make your parish a Community Serving Humanity?
4. What THREE suggestions do you have to make the theme Community Serving Humanity a reality in your parish ?

Kindly note that the replies to these questions are not to be sent in but to be brought to the Diocesan Consultation on 7 November.

May Christ the Supreme Evangelist and his Holy Spirit continue to guide us in our preparation for the Diocesan Consultation.

In his loving service and yours,

  
ARCHBISHOP OF DURBAN

ARCHDIOCESE OF DURBAN

DIOCESAN CONSULTATION : 7 -8 NOVEMBER, 1987

Circular No. 3      6 October, 1987

TO THE CLERGY OF THE ARCHDIOCESE : PRIESTS AND DEACONS

Dear Brothers in Christ,

Further to my pastoral letter of July, 1987 on pastoral planning and a subsequent circular, information forms are being sent only to clergy in deaneries of Midlands, Pietermaritzburg - Vulindlela, Umvoti and the more distant parishes of North Coast and Highway. These information forms deal with accommodation.

It must be clearly understood that all members of the clergy, priests and deacons, are obliged to participate in the Consultation unless excused in writing by myself.

The times of the Consultation are as follows :

Saturday 7 November:      09h00 to 17h30

Sunday 8 November :      09h00 to 17h00.

During these times participation in the Consultation means that Mass cannot be celebrated in parishes. The Eucharist is clearly the greatest sacrament of the Church but on occasions it may have to be sacrificed for another form of evangelisation as Jesus himself indicated that worship may have to give way to an act of reconciliation (Matthew 5: 23-24).

Mass may be celebrated in parishes before or after the times given above, provided the priest is present throughout the Consultation.

It has been pointed out that the arrangement favours Durban parishes over others when among these others there are many communities in rural areas that are often without Mass on Sunday. Durban parishes should bear this in mind when making their arrangements.

The final act of the Consultation will be a community Eucharist on Sunday, 8 November at 15h00. It should be an affirmation and celebration of christian community, so priests must make it a point of honour and commitment to participate as concelebrants or in the congregation.

Counting on your fraternal understanding and co-operation and assuring you of my affectionate regards.

I remain,

Devotedly yours in the Lord's service,

*+ Denis E. Hurley*

DENIS E HURLEY, O M I  
ARCHBISHOP OF DURBAN

# *Please join in the journey of Renew*

*A pastoral letter to the people of the  
Catholic Archdiocese of Durban...*



*Dear Sisters and  
Brothers in Christ,*

*This letter is a special  
invitation coming to  
you from the two of  
us, the Archbishop  
and Bishop Khumalo.  
We want you to join  
the spiritual journey  
of Renew in the  
Archdiocese of  
Durban*



Over many years of faithful ministry our priests have dedicated themselves to the care of your spiritual life, through sermons, Sunday liturgies, celebration of other sacraments, catechetical instruction, retreats and parish missions. We are deeply grateful for that wonderful service.

Through it our parishes are spiritually alive. Now we want them to become even more alive and we want that greater life to be seen and felt throughout the Archdiocese.

We are entering a period of concerted diocesan striving: bishops, priests, deacons, religious sisters and brothers and people – united in the great effort of Renew.

In our letter for the launch of the Pastoral Plan on Pentecost Sunday this year we wrote of the joy, hope and excitement that filled our hearts. We were looking forward to what we expected would be done in the Archdiocese of Durban through the Pastoral plan fulfilled by the Renew process.

We have found echoes of this joy, hope and excitement in many people. They see in the Plan and in Renew a wonderful opportunity for our Church to express itself with greater fervour and to live its life with greater vigour.

What is intensely gratifying is the way that the Diocesan Renew Team is carrying out its task. Just to be near them is to be filled with their enthusiasm. Just to see them at work makes you wonder where all their joyous energy comes from. But of course one need not wonder for long. When the Holy Spirit takes over the minds and hearts and energies a team of workers becomes a spiritual power house.

Through planning meetings and training sessions many hundreds of people have become involved in the process of Renew. They seem happy to find themselves caught up in a great united effort marked by prayer, love, and the promise of work for Christ and his Church.

Many are beginning to see in the Pastoral Plan and in its fulfilment by Renew an answer to the question: What is the Church doing about the problems that people experience in their faith life?

As you know only too well these problems include:

- the break-up of marriage and family life;

- the tragic ease with which young people fall away from the practice of the faith or look outside the Catholic Church for the satisfaction of their religious needs;
- the difficulty of relating Christian life to the world in which we live and work;
- the special difficulty of living and acting in a truly christian way in South Africa's racial situation;
- the impression of having to battle alone and without support to remain faithful to Christ and his Church.

*Doesn't it excite you to experience that for the first time in our history thousands of people in all our parishes are being invited to join together in a great common effort of christian formation and are already beginning to respond? Isn't this the Church trying to respond to the question: What are you doing to help us with our problems?*

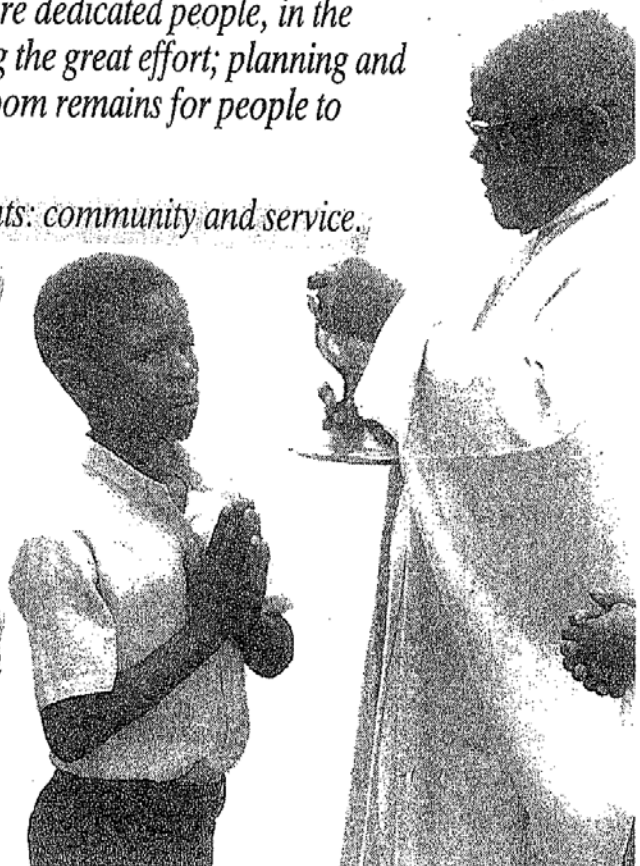
*The Church is saying: you are part of the Church, you are part of Christ. Help solve the problems by joining in the effort, the action, the prayer, the loving sacrifice and the joy of Renew.*

*Here is a plan. Here is a process. Here are dedicated people, in the Diocesan Team, planning and preparing the great effort; planning and preparing in such a way that plenty of room remains for people to choose how they join in and participate.*

*The Plan has two very important elements: community and service.*

*Service means playing an active part in the life of the Church, in what it does to meet the needs of people. Serving others is following in the footsteps of Jesus and doing what he did, "The Son of Man came", he said, "not to be served but to serve" (Mt. 20:28)*

*Community means working together in teams or groups in our parishes in which people find support, co-operation and christian love. Alone we are divided and weak. But if we share with others and let the world see that the Church is a*



community of disciples filled with the presence of the risen Lord we can look forward to doing God's work with confidence.

Through his grace may the launch of Renew on 30 July be a powerful and enthusiastic affirmation of what we hope to achieve in terms of community and service. We, your bishops, look forward to that day and all that must follow it.

We look forward to that day when having heard The Lord's Call (Season 1) and having made Our Response (Season 2) we are Empowered by the Spirit (Season 3) and become faithful disciples (Season 4) and learn to share the Gospel Message with others (Season 5).

All this, please God, will result in a new emphasis on sharing in the mission of Jesus; resulting too in whatever new forms are required in the life of the parish and the Archdiocese.

By means of Renew, empowered by God's grace and supported by the prayers of our Blessed Mother, let us go forward to become COMMUNITY SERVING HUMANITY.

Our blessing comes to you with the assurance of our love for you and union with you in Christ Jesus our Lord.

+ Denis E. Hurley

+ Denis E. Hurley O.M.I.  
Archbishop of Durban

+ Dominic J. Khumalo, O.M.I.

+ Dominic J. Khumalo O.M.I.  
Auxiliary Bishop

*P.S. Please join us in celebrating the mass of the launch of Renew*

*Sunday 30th July, 1989*

*11.00 a.m.*

*Westridge Stadium*